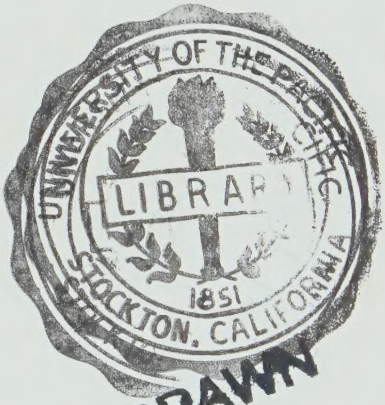
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GIOVANNI BOCCACCIO

Author of the

"DECAMERONE, OR HUNDRED TALES"

(*Commedia Umana*)

STORIES

OF

BOCCACCIO

(*The Decameron*)

Boccaccio, Giovanni.

WITH ALL THE POEMS (MANY OF WHICH ARE OMITTED IN OTHER EDITIONS); AND WITH NOTES TO EACH STORY, GIVING VALUABLE HISTORICAL DATA AND SHOWING THE INFLUENCE OF *THE DECAMERON* ON THE LITERATURE OF EUROPE IN ANCIENT AND MODERN TIMES— FORMING, IN MANY INSTANCES, A KEY TO THE PERSONAGES OF THE STORY

INCLUDING ALSO YE MERRY TALE
Now first done into English

BY

JOHN PAYNE

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PREFACE.

For the first time the great work which produced so marked an effect on the romantic literature of modern Europe, is laid before the reader in a garb which at least does not misrepresent its original features.

"There are few works," says Dunlop, in his history of Fiction, "which have had an equal influence on literature with the Decameron of Boccaccio. Even in England its effects were powerful. [From it Chaucer adopted the notion of the frame in which he has enclosed his tales, and the general manner of his stories, while in some instances, as we have seen, he has merely versified the novels of the Italian.] In 1566, William Paynter printed many of Boccaccio's stories in English, in his work called the Palace of Pleasure. This first translation contained sixty novels, and it was soon followed by another volume, comprehending thirty-four additional tales. These are the pages of which Shakespeare made so much use. From Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy we learn that one of the great amusements of our ancestors was reading Boccaccio aloud, an entertainment of which the effects were speedily visible in the literature of the country. The first English translation, however, of the whole Decameron, did not appear till 1620. In France, Boccaccio found early and illustrious imitators. In his own country he brought his native language to perfection, and gave stability to a mode of composition

which before his time had only existed in a rude state in Italy; he collected the current tales of the age, which he decorated with new circumstances, and delivered in a style which has no parallel for elegance, naiveté, and grace. Hence his popularity was unbounded, and his imitators more numerous than those of any author recorded in the annals of literature."

A translation of the Decameron which appeared in 1741, has been reproduced in all subsequent editions, with only a partial attempt at revision in 1804. The task which was then but imperfectly, has now been most carefully, performed. Every page, almost every line, has undergone considerable modifications: large omissions have been supplied; and brief critical and historical notices have been appended to most of the novels. In many instances these will be found interesting to the English student, as indicating the parentage of some of the choicest portions of our early literature,

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a tale from BOCCACCIO

INTRODUCTION.

TO THE LADIES.

When I reflect how disposed you are by nature to compassion, I cannot help being apprehensive lest what I now offer to your acceptance should seem to have but a harsh and offensive beginning; for it presents at the very outset the mournful remembrance of that most fatal plague, so terrible yet in the memories of us all. But let not this dismay you from reading further, as though every page were to cost you sighs and tears. Rather let this beginning, disagreeable as it is, seem to you but as a rugged and steep mountain placed before a delightful valley, which appears more beautiful and pleasant, as the way to it was more difficult: for as joy usually ends in sorrow, so again the end of sorrow is joy. To this short fatigue (I call it short, because contained in few words) immediately succeeds the mirth and pleasure I had before promised you; and which, but for that promise, you would scarcely expect to find. And in truth could I have brought you by any other way than this, I would gladly have done it; but as the occasion of the occurrences, of which I am going to treat, could not well be made out without such a relation, I am forced to use this Introduction.

In the year then of our Lord 1348, there happened at Florence, the finest city in all Italy, a most terrible plague; which, whether owing to the influence of the planets, or that it was sent from God as a just punishment for our sins, had broken out some years before in the Levant, and after passing from place to place, and making incredible havoc all the way, had now reached the west. There, spite of all the means that art and human foresight could suggest, such as keeping the city clear from filth, the exclusion of all suspected persons, and the publication of copious instructions for the preservation of health; and notwithstanding manifold humble supplications offered to God in processions and otherwise; it began to show itself in the spring of the aforesaid year, in

a sad and wonderful manner. Unlike what had been seen in the east, where bleeding from the nose is the fatal prognostic, here there appeared certain tumours in the groin or under the arm-pits, some as big as a small apple, others as an egg; and afterwards purple spots in most parts of the body; in some cases large and but few in number, in others smaller and more numerous—both sorts the usual messengers of death. To the cure of this malady, neither medical knowledge nor the power of drugs was of any effect; whether because the disease was in its own nature mortal, or that the physicians (the number of whom, taking quacks and women pretenders into the account, was grown very great) could form no just idea of the cause, nor consequently devise a true method of cure; whichever was the reason, few escaped; but nearly all died the third day from the first appearance of the symptoms, some sooner, some later, without any fever or accessory symptoms. What gave the more virulence to this plague, was that, by being communicated from the sick to the hale, it spread daily, like fire when it comes in contact with large masses of combustibles. Nor was it caught only by conversing with, or coming near the sick, but even by touching their clothes, or anything that they had before touched. It is wonderful, what I am going to mention; and had I not seen it with my own eyes, and were there not many witnesses to attest it besides myself, I should never venture to relate it, however worthy it were of belief. Such, I say, was the quality of the pestilential matter, as to pass not only from man to man, but, what is more strange, it has been often known, that anything belonging to the infected, if touched by any other creature, would certainly infect, and even kill that creature in a short space of time. One instance of this kind I took particular notice of: the rags of a poor man just dead had been thrown into the street; two hogs came up, and after rooting amongst the rags, and shaking them about in their mouths, in less than an hour they both turned round and died on the spot.

These facts, and others of the like sort, occasioned various fears and devices amongst those who survived, all tending to the same uncharitable and cruel end; which was, to avoid the sick, and every thing that had been near them, expecting by that means to save themselves. And some holding it best to live temperately, and to avoid excesses of all kinds, made parties, and shut themselves up from the rest of the world; eating and drinking moderately of the best, and diverting

themselves with music, and such other entertainments as they might have within doors; never listening to anything from without, to make them uneasy. Others maintained free living to be a better preservative, and would baulk no passion or appetite they wished to gratify, drinking and revelling incessantly from tavern to tavern, or in private houses (which were frequently found deserted by the owners, and therefore common to every one), yet strenuously avoiding, with all this brutal indulgence, to come near the infected. And such, at that time, was the public distress, that the laws, human and divine, were no more regarded; for the officers, to put them in force, being either dead, sick, or in want of persons to assist them, every one did just as he pleased. A third sort of people chose a method between these two: not confining themselves to rules of diet like the former, and yet avoiding the intemperance of the latter; but eating and drinking what their appetites required, they walked everywhere with odours and nosegays to smell to; as holding it best to corroborate the brain: for the whole atmosphere seemed to them tainted with the stench of dead bodies, arising partly from the distemper itself, and partly from the fermenting of the medicines within them. Others with less humanity, but perchance, as they supposed, with more security from danger, decided that the only remedy for the pestilence was to avoid it: persuaded, therefore, of this, and taking care for themselves only, men and women in great numbers left the city, their houses, relations, and effects, and fled into the country: as if the wrath of God had been restrained to visit those only within the walls of the city; or else concluding, that none ought to stay in a place thus doomed to destruction.

Thus divided as they were in their views, neither did all die, nor all escape; but falling sick indifferently, as well those of one as of another opinion; they who first set the example by forsaking others, now languished themselves without pity. I pass over the little regard that citizens and relations showed to each other; for their terror was such, that a brother even fled from his brother, a wife from her husband, and, what is more uncommon, a parent from his own child. Hence numbers that fell sick could have no help but what the charity of friends, who were very few, or the avarice of servants supplied; and even these were scarce and at extravagant wages, and so little used to the business that they were fit only to reach what was called for, and observe when their employer died; and this desire of getting money often cost

them their lives. From this desertion of friends, and scarcity of servants, an unheard-of custom prevailed; no lady, however young or handsome, would scruple to be attended by a man-servant, whether young or old it mattered not, and to expose herself naked to him, the necessity of the distemper requiring it, as though it was to a woman; which might make those who recovered, less modest for the time to come. And many lost their lives, who might have escaped, had they been looked after at all. So that, between the scarcity of servants, and the violence of the distemper, such numbers were continually dying, as made it terrible to hear as well as to behold. Whence, from mere necessity, many customs were introduced different from what had been before known in the city.

It had been usual, as it now is, for the women who were friends and neighbours to the deceased, to meet together at his house, and to lament with his relations; at the same time the men would get together at the door, with a number of clergy, according to the person's circumstances; and the corpse was carried by people of his own rank, with the solemnity of tapers and singing, to that church where the deceased had desired to be buried. This custom was now laid aside, and, so far from having a crowd of women to lament over them, great numbers passed out of the world without a witness. Few were they who had the tears of their friends at their departure; those friends were laughing and making themselves merry the while; for even the women had learned to postpone every other concern to that of their own lives. Nor was a corpse attended by more than ten or a dozen, nor those citizens of credit, but fellows hired for the purpose; who would put themselves under the bier, and carry it with all possible haste to the nearest church; and the corpse was interred, without any great ceremony, where they could find room. With regard to the lower sort, and many of a middling rank, the scene was still more affecting; for they staying at home either through poverty or hopes of succour in distress, fell sick daily by thousands, and, having nobody to attend them, generally died: some breathed their last in the streets, and others shut up in their own houses, where the stench that came from them made the first discovery of their deaths to the neighbourhood. And, indeed, every place was filled with the dead. Hence it became a general practice, as well out of regard to the living as pity for the dead, for the neighbours, assisted by what porters they could meet with,

to clear all the houses, and lay the bodies at the doors; and every morning great numbers might be seen brought out in this manner, to be carried away on biers, or tables, two or three at a time; and sometimes it has happened that a wife and her husband, two or three brothers, and a father and son, have been laid on together. It has been observed also, whilst two or three priests have walked before a corpse with their crucifix, that two or three sets of porters have fallen in with them; and where they knew but of one dead body, they have buried six, eight, or more: nor was there any to follow, and shed a few tears over them; for things were come to that pass, that men's lives were no more regarded than the lives of so many beasts. Thus it plainly appeared, that what the wisest in the ordinary course of things, and by a common train of calamities, could never be taught, namely, to bear them patiently, this, by the excess of calamity, was now grown a familiar lesson to the most simple and unthinking. The consecrated ground no longer containing the numbers which were continually brought thither, especially as they were desirous of laying every one in the parts allotted to their families, they were forced to dig trenches, and to put them in by hundreds, piling them up in rows, as goods are stored in a ship, and throwing in a little earth till they were filled to the top.

Not to dwell upon every particular of our misery, I shall observe, that it fared no better with the adjacent country; for, to omit the different boroughs about us, which presented the same view in miniature with the city, you might see the poor distressed labourers, with their families, without either the aid of physicians, or help of servants, languishing on the highways, in the fields, and in their own houses, and dying rather like cattle than human creatures. The consequence was that, growing dissolute in their manners like the citizens, and careless of everything, as supposing every day to be their last, their thoughts were not so much employed how to improve, as how to use their substance for their present support. The oxen, asses, sheep, goats, swine, and the dogs themselves, ever faithful to their masters, being driven from their own homes, were left to roam at will about the fields, and among the standing corn, which no one cared to gather, or even to reap; and many times, after they had filled themselves in the day, the animals would return of their own accord like rational creatures at night.

What can I say more, if I return to the city? unless that

such was the cruelty of Heaven, and perhaps of men, that between March and July following, according to authentic reckonings, upwards of a hundred thousand souls perished in the city only; whereas, before that calamity, it was not supposed to have contained so many inhabitants. What magnificent dwellings, what noble palaces were then depopulated to the last inhabitant! what families became extinct! what riches and vast possessions were left, and no known heir to inherit them! what numbers of both sexes, in the prime and vigour of youth, whom in the morning neither Galen, Hippocrates, nor Æsculapius himself, would have denied to be in perfect health, breakfasted in the morning with their living friends, and supped at night with their departed friends in the other world!

But I am weary of recounting our late miseries; therefore, passing by everything that I can well omit, I proceed to say, that the city being left almost without inhabitants, it happened one Tuesday morning, as I was informed by persons of good credit, that seven ladies, all in deep mourning, as most proper for that time, had been attending Divine service in the church of Santa Maria Novella, where they formed the whole congregation. The youngest of these ladies was in age not less than eighteen, the eldest did not exceed twenty-eight; they were all relations or near friends; all discreet, nobly descended, and perfectly accomplished, both in person and behaviour. I do not mention their names, lest any of them should be put to the blush by something herein after related of them; for the limits of allowed disport are much narrower in our day than they were in those times, when, for the reasons already mentioned, they were very ample indeed, not only for persons of their age, but for those of much maturer years. Neither would I give a handle to ill-natured persons, who carp at everything that is praiseworthy, to detract in any way from the modesty of these worshipful ladies by injurious reflections. But that I may relate all that occurred without confusion, I shall affix names to every one, bearing some resemblance to the quality of the person. The eldest, then, I call Pampinea, the next to her Fiammetta, the third Filomena, the fourth Emilia, the fifth Lauretta, the sixth Neifile, and the youngest Eliza. These seven being got together, by chance rather than any appointment, into the corner of the church, and there seated in a ring, after a while left off sighing and saying their paternosters, and began to converse concerning the nature of the times,

This continued for some time, and presently Pampinea thus began:

"My dear girls, you have often heard, as well as I, that we do no wrong to any one, when we only make an honest use of our own reason: now reason tells us, that we are to preserve our lives by all possible means: and, in some cases, at the expense of the lives of others. If then the laws, which regard the good of the community, allow this, may not we much rather (and all that mean honestly as we do), without giving offence to any, use the means now in our power for our own preservation? Every moment, when I think of what has passed to-day, and every day, I perceive, as you may also, that we are all in pain for ourselves. Nor do I wonder at this; but much rather, as we are women, do I wonder that none of us should look out for a remedy, when we have so much reason to be afraid. We stay here for no other purpose, that I can see, but to observe what numbers come to be buried, or to listen if the monks, who are now reduced to a very few, sing their services at the proper times; or else to show by our habits the greatness of our distress. And if we go hence, it is either to see multitudes of the dead and sick carried along the streets; or persons who have been outlawed for their villanies, now facing it out publicly, in safe defiance of the laws; or the scum of the city, enriched with the public calamity, and insulting us with ribald ballads. Nor is anything now talked of, but that such a one is dead, or dying; and, were any left to mourn, we should hear nothing but lamentations. Or if we go home—I know not whether it fares with you as with myself—when I find out of a numerous family not one left, besides a maid-servant, I am frightened out of my senses; and go where I will, the ghosts of the departed seem always before me; not like the persons whilst they were living, but assuming a ghastly and dreadful aspect. Therefore the case is the same, whether we stay here, depart hence, or go home; especially as there are few left but ourselves who are able to go, and have a place to go to. Those few too, I am told, fall into all sorts of debauchery; and even cloistered ladies, supposing themselves entitled to equal liberties with others, are as bad as the worst. Now if this be so (as you see plainly it is), what do we here? What are we dreaming of? Why are we less regardful of our lives than other people of theirs? Are we of less value to ourselves, or are our souls and bodies more firmly united, and so in less danger of dissolution? It is monstrous to

think in such a manner; so many of both sexes dying of this distemper in the very prime of their youth afford us an undeniable argument to the contrary. Wherefore, lest through our own wilfulness or neglect, this calamity, which might have been prevented, should befall us, I should think it best (and I hope you will join with me) for us to quit the town, and avoiding, as we would death itself, the bad example of others, to choose some place of retirement, of which every one of us has more than one, where we may make ourselves innocently merry, without offering the least violence to the dictates of reason and our own consciences. There will our ears be entertained with the warbling of the birds, and our eyes with the verdure of the hills and valleys; with the waving of cornfields like the sea itself; with trees of a thousand different kinds, and a more open and serene sky; which, however overcast, yet affords a far more agreeable prospect than these desolate walls. The air also is pleasanter, and there is greater plenty of everything, attended with few inconveniences: for, though people die there as well as here, yet we shall have fewer such objects before us, as the inhabitants are less in number; and on the other part, if I judge right, we desert nobody, but are rather ourselves forsaken. For all our friends, either by death, or endeavouring to avoid it, have left us, as if we in no way belonged to them. As no blame then can ensue from following this advice, and perhaps sickness and death from not doing so, I would have us take our maids, and everything we may be supposed to want, and enjoy all the diversions which the season will permit, to-day in one place, to-morrow in another; and so continue to do, unless death should interpose, until we see what end Providence designs for these things. And of this too let me remind you, that our characters will stand as fair by our going away reputably, as those of others will do who stay at home with discredit."

The ladies having heard what Pampinea had to offer, not only approved of it, but had actually began to concert measures for their instant departure, when Filomena, who was a most discreet person, remarked: "Though Pampinea has spoken well, yet there is no occasion to run headlong into the affair, as you are about to do. We are but women, nor is any of us so ignorant as not to know how little able we shall be to conduct such an affair, without some man to help us. We are naturally fickle, obstinate, suspicious, and fearful; and I doubt much, unless we take somebody into our scheme to

manage it for us, lest it soon be at an end; and perhaps, little to our reputation. Let us provide against this, therefore, before we begin."

Eliza then replied: "It is true, man is our sex's chief or head, and without his management, it seldom happens that any undertaking of ours succeeds well. But how are these men to be come at? We all know that the greater part of our male acquaintance are dead, and the rest all dispersed abroad, avoiding what we seek to avoid, and without our knowing where to find them. To take strangers with us, would not be altogether so proper: for, whilst we have regard to our health, we should so contrive matters, that, wherever we go to repose and divert ourselves, no scandal may ensue from it."

Whilst this matter was in debate, behold, three gentlemen came into the church, the youngest not less than twenty-five years of age, and in whom neither the adversity of the times, the loss of relations and friends, nor even fear for themselves, could stifle, or indeed cool, the passion of love. One was called Pamfilo, the second Filostrato, and the third Dioneo, all of them well bred, and pleasant companions; and who, to divert themselves in this time of affliction, were then in pursuit of their mistresses, who as it chanced were three of these seven ladies, the other four being all related to one or other of them. These gentlemen were no sooner within view, than the ladies had immediately their eyes upon them, and Pampinea said, with a smile, "See, fortune is with us, and has thrown in our way three prudent and worthy gentlemen, who will conduct and wait upon us, if we think fit to accept of their service." Neifile, with a blush, because she was one that had an admirer, answered: "Take care what you say, I know them all indeed to be persons of character, and fit to be trusted, even in affairs of more consequence, and in better company; but, as some of them are enamoured of certain ladies here, I am only concerned lest we be drawn into some scrape or scandal, without either our fault or theirs." Filomena replied: "Never tell me what other people may think, so long as I know myself to be virtuous; God and the truth will be my defence; and if they be willing to go, we will say with Pampinea, that fortune is with us."

The rest hearing her speak in this manner, gave consent that the gentlemen should be invited to partake in this expedition. And, without more words, Pampinea, who was related to one of the three, rose up, and made towards them,

as they stood watching at a distance. Then, after a cheerful salutation, she acquainted them with the design in hand, and entreated that they would, out of pure friendship, oblige them with their company. The gentlemen at first took it all for a jest, but, being assured to the contrary, immediately answered that they were ready; and, to lose no time, gave the necessary orders for what they wished to have done. Everything being thus prepared, and a messenger dispatched before, whither they intended to go, the next morning, which was Wednesday, by break of day, the ladies, with some of their women, and the gentlemen, with every one his servant, set out from the city, and, after they had travelled two short miles, came to the place appointed.

It was a little eminence, remote from any great road, covered with trees and shrubs of an agreeable verdure; and on the top was a stately palace, with a grand and beautiful court in the middle: within were galleries, and fine apartments elegantly fitted up, and adorned with most curious paintings; around it were fine meadows, and most delightful gardens, with fountains of the purest and best water. The vaults also were stored with the richest wines, suited rather to the taste of copious topers, than of modest and virtuous ladies. This palace they found cleared out, and everything set in order for their reception, with the rooms all graced with the flowers of the season, to their great satisfaction. The party being seated, Dioneo, who was the pleasantest of them all, and full of words, began: "Your wisdom it is, ladies, rather than any foresight of ours, which has brought us hither. I know not how you have disposed of your cares; as for mine, I left them all behind me when I came from home. Either prepare, then, to be as merry as myself (I mean with decency), or give me leave to go back again, and resume my cares where I left them." Pampinea made answer, as if she had disposed of hers in like manner: "You say right, sir, we will be merry; we fled from our troubles for no other reason. But, as extremes are never likely to last, I, who first proposed the means by which such an agreeable company is now met together, being desirous to make our mirth of some continuance, do find there is a necessity for our appointing a principal, whom we shall honour and obey in all things as our head; and whose province it shall be to regulate our diversions. And that every one may make trial of the burthen which attends care, as well as the pleasure which there is in superiority, nor therefore envy what he has not

yet tried, I hold it best that every one should experience both the trouble and the honour for one day. The first, I propose, shall be elected by us all, and on the approach of evening, shall name a person to succeed for the following day: and each one, during the time of his or her government, shall give orders concerning the place where, and the manner how, we are to live."

These words were received with the highest satisfaction, and the speaker was, with one consent, appointed president for the first day: whilst Filomena, running to a laurel-tree (for she had often heard how much that tree has always been esteemed, and what honour was conferred on those who were deservedly crowned with it), made a garland, and put it upon Pampinea's head. That garland, whilst the company continued together, was ever after to be the ensign of sovereignty.

Pampinea, being thus elected queen, enjoined silence, and having summoned to her presence the gentlemen's servants, and their own women, who were four in number: "To give you the first example," said she, "how, by proceeding from good to better, we may live orderly and pleasantly, and continue together, without the least reproach, as long as we please, in the first place I declare Parmeno, Dioneo's servant, master of my household, and to him I commit the care of my family, and everything relating to my hall. Sirisco, Pamfilo's servant, I appoint my treasurer, and to be under the direction of Parmeno; and Tindaro I command to wait on Filostrato and the other two gentlemen, whilst their servants are thus employed. Mysia, my woman, and Licisca, Filomena's, I order into the kitchen, there to get ready what shall be provided by Parmeno. To Lauretta's Chimera, and Fiammetta's Stratilia, I give the care of the ladies' chambers, and to keep the room clean where we sit. And I will and command you all, on pain of my displeasure, that wherever you go, or whatever you hear and see, you bring no news here but what is good." These orders were approved by all: and the queen, rising from her seat, with a good deal of gaiety, added: "Here are gardens and meadows, where you may divert yourselves till nine o'clock, when I shall expect you back, that we may dine in the cool of the day."

The company were now at liberty, and the gentlemen and ladies took a pleasant walk in the garden, talking over a thousand merry things by the way, and diverting themselves by singing love songs, and weaving garlands of flowers. Returning at the time appointed, they found Parmeno busy in

the execution of his office: for in a saloon below was the table set forth, covered with the neatest linen, with glasses reflecting a lustre like silver: and water having been presented to them to wash their hands, by the queen's order, Parmeno desired them to sit down. The dishes were now served up in the most elegant manner, and the best wines brought in, the servants waiting all the time with the most profound silence; and being well pleased with their entertainment, they dined with all the facetiousness and mirth imaginable. When dinner was over, as they could all dance, and some both play and sing well, the queen ordered in the musical instruments. Dioneo took a lute, and Fiammetta a viol, in obedience to the royal command; a dance was struck up, and the queen, with the rest of the company, took an agreeable turn or two, whilst the servants were sent to dinner; and when the dance was ended, they began to sing, and continued till the queen thought it time to break up. Her permission being given, the gentlemen retired to their chambers, remote from the ladies' lodging rooms, and the ladies did the same, and undressed themselves for bed.

It was little more than three, when the queen rose, and ordered all to be called, alleging that much sleep in the day-time was unwholesome. Then they went into a meadow of deep grass, where the sun had little power; and having the benefit of a pleasant breeze, they sat down in a circle, as the queen had commanded, and she addressed them in this manner:—"As the sun is high, and the heat excessive, and nothing is to be heard but the chirping of the cicalas among the olives, it would be madness for us to think of moving yet: this is an airy place, and here are chess-boards and back-gammon tables to divert yourselves with; but if you will be ruled by me, you will not play at all, since it often makes the one party uneasy, without any great pleasure to the other, or to the lookers-on; but let us begin and tell stories, and in this manner one person will entertain the whole company; and by the time it has gone round, the worst part of the day will be over, and then we can divert ourselves as we like best. If this be agreeable to you, then (for I wait to know your pleasure) let us begin; if not, you are at your own disposal till the evening." This motion being approved by all, the queen continued, "Let every one for this first day take what subject he fancies most:" and turning to Pamfilo, who sat on her right hand, she bade him begin. He readily obeyed, and spoke to this effect, so as to be distinctly heard by the whole company.

THE FIRST DAY.

NOVEL I.

Chappelet imposes upon a holy friar by a sham confession, and dies; and, although a very wicked fellow, comes afterwards to be reputed a saint, and called St. Chappelet.

It is most meet and right, dear ladies, that everything we do should be begun in the name of Him who is the Maker of all things. Therefore, as I am to entertain you first, I shall relate an instance of his marvellous ways, which may direct us to place all our hopes in him, as the only unchangeable being, and evermore to praise him. Certain it is, that all earthly things are transitory and mortal; attended with great troubles, and subject to infinite dangers; which we who live embroiled with them, and are even part of them, could neither endure, nor find a remedy for, were it not for the especial grace of God that enables us,—a blessing which we are not to expect through our own merits, but his goodness, and the intercession of those saints, who, having been once mortal men like ourselves, and done his will whilst on earth, now enjoy happiness and immortality in heaven. To them, as to fit agents, informed of our frailties by their own experience, we, not daring, perhaps, immediately to address ourselves to so great a Judge, offer up our prayers for what we want. And we find his mercy the greater, forasmuch as, not being able to pry into the secrets of his Divine will, we may sometimes make choice of a mediator before him, who is banished eternally from his presence: and yet he from whom nothing is hidden, having regard to the purity of the supplicant, rather than to his ignorance, or the situation of the person to whom he applies himself, hears those who pray in this manner, as if that mediator were really a saint. All this will most plainly appear from the following story; I say most plainly, not with reference to the judgment of God, but of man.

There lived in France a person named Musciat; who, from a wealthy merchant became a courtier, and went into Tuscany with Charles, surnamed Lackland, brother to the King of France, who was instigated to that expedition by Pope Boniface. This gentleman, finding his affairs in a very complicated state, as is usual with persons in trade, and being moreover unable to adjust them himself, without a good deal

of time and trouble, resolved to employ several agents for their arrangement. By this means he settled everything to his mind, excepting some debts which were outstanding from persons in Burgundy. The reason was, he had found them to be a set of perverse, ill-conditioned, rascally fellows, and he could not for his life conceive where a man might be met with bad enough to match them. After much thinking about it, he at last called to mind one Ciappelletto da Prato, who used to come much to his house at Paris; and he being a little pragmatical fellow, the French, not knowing the meaning of his true name, which was Capperello, but thinking him to have been called Cappello, gave him the diminutive name of Ciappelletto, or Chappelet, that is, "garland," by which he was generally known there.

Now the character of the man was this: being by trade a scrivener, he was really ashamed if any writings of his (he did not draw many indeed) were found without some fault or flaw; and would do that sort of work for nothing, with more pleasure than a just thing that he was to be well paid for. He was glad at all times of being a false witness, whether it was required of him or not; and, as great regard was had to an oath in France, he, who made no scruple to forswear himself on every occasion, was sure of every cause that depended on his single testimony. To foment quarrels and disputes was his utmost pleasure, especially amongst friends or relations; and the more mischief he occasioned, the greater was his satisfaction. Was a man to be dispatched at any time, he was the person to undertake it, and would do it with his own hands. He was a great blasphemer of God and his saints, swearing and cursing on every occasion. He went to church at no time, but spoke always of the holy sacraments in the same abominable terms as he would do of the vilest things in the world; on the other hand, he was eternally at taverns, and places of bad repute. Of women he was as fond as a dog is of a stick; but to unnatural vice, no wretch so abandoned as himself. He would pilfer and steal with as much conscience as others give to charity. He was a glutton and drunkard, to the ruin of his constitution. He was also a most notorious gamester; making use always of false dice. And, to sum up his character in few words, perhaps his equal in wickedness has not yet been born. Yet, bad as he was, he had all along been screened by the favour and interest of Musciat, as well from the resentment of private persons, whom he had often injured, as from that of the court, to which he gave daily provocation.

This man came into Musciat's thoughts at last, who being no stranger to every part of his life, concluded him to be such a one as the tempers of the people he had to deal with required. Sending for him, therefore, he addressed him thus: "Master Chappelet, you know that I am about to leave this country, and as I have affairs to settle with some people of Burgundy, who are full of quirks and deceit, I do not know any one that I can employ so fit to manage them as yourself; you have a good deal of spare time, and if you will undertake it, I will procure you recommendatory letters from court, and allow you a reasonable part of what you recover." Chappelet, who found himself much embarrassed in the world, and likely to be more so when his great friend was gone, without hesitating at all about it, answered that he was willing. They agreed upon terms; Musciat gave him a deputation, procured him letters he had promised, and he set out for Burgundy, where, being quite a stranger, he endeavoured, contrary to his former manner, to do the business he came about by fair means, reserving a different behaviour to the last. He lodged with two brothers, who were usurers. They entertained him well on Musciat's account, and on his falling sick there, they had physicians to see him, and servants to attend him; nor was anything omitted that could be of service, but all in vain; for this worthy good man, who was advanced in years, and had been also an irregular liver, grew worse and worse in the judgment of the physicians; so that he was looked upon as a dead man; at which the brothers were greatly concerned.

One day, being near the chamber where he lay, they began to have some talk together about him: "What shall we do with this fellow?" said one to the other; "we have a fine affair upon our hands, on his account. For to turn him out in this condition would afford matter for reproach, and also be a proof of our want of understanding; the people seeing us receive him before into our house, and supply him with physic, and all things necessary; and now seeing us turn him out whilst he is dying, without his having been able to do anything that we ought to be offended at. On the other hand, he has been such a vile fellow always, that he will never be brought to confess, and to receive the sacraments of the Church; and should he die without them, no church will receive his body; but he most be put into the ground like a dog. Or should he confess, his sins will appear so enormous, that the like were never known: nor can any priest be found

that will give him absolution, and without that he must still be thrown into a ditch: and should this happen, the people of this country, who think ours an iniquitous trade, and are daily reviling us, would be apt to raise a mutiny, and declare publicly that they will no longer bear with these Lombards, these extortioning villains, whom the Church disdains to receive into her bosom. They will make that a pretence to plunder us of all we are worth, and abuse our persons into the bargain; so that it will be bad for us on all sides, should this man die."

Chappelet, who, as we have said, lay not far off, heard all this, for sick people are often quick of hearing, and calling them to him, said: "I would have you be in no doubt or fear of harm to yourselves on my account; I have heard what you have been talking about, and am confident the thing would happen as you say, were everything to be as you suppose; but I will take care that it shall happen otherwise. I have been guilty of so much wickedness in my lifetime, that to add one sin at my death, will not make the sum much greater: therefore send for the most able and pious priest you know of, if a pious one can be found, and I will take such care of your affairs, as well as of my own, that you shall have reason to be satisfied." The brothers expected no great matters from this; they went however to a convent, and desired that some learned and holy person would come and take the confession of a Lombard, who was sick in their house. Accordingly, a venerable old friar, of great sanctity and learning, and much reverenced by the whole city, was ordered to go with them, who on coming into the room, seated himself by the sick man's bedside, and began, after some heavenly consolations, to inquire of him, how long it was since he had last confessed. Chappelet, who had never confessed in his whole life, replied:

"Holy father, it has been usual with me always to confess once a week at least, and sometimes oftener; but it is true, since I have been sick, my affliction has been such, that I have not confessed at all."

"That is well, my son," said the friar, "thus you should always do; and I perceive as you have confessed so often, that I shall have but little trouble, either in hearing or asking you questions."

"Good father, do not say so," cried Chappelet: "I have never so often confessed, but that I would always mention every sin that I could recollect from the hour I was born.

Therefore I beg you will examine me as particularly, as if I had never confessed at all; and do not regard my languishing condition; for I had much rather do what may disoblige the flesh, than, by consulting the ease of my body, bring damnation on my soul, which my Saviour has purchased with his most precious blood."

The good old man was ravished with these expressions, esteeming them proofs of a well-disposed mind; and having commended his piety, he asked him whether he had ever offended God by the knowledge of women. Chappelet, fetching a deep sigh, replied: "I am ashamed to speak the truth, lest I should be thought to offend by vain-glory."—"Speak out boldly," said the priest, "for there can be no harm in telling truth, whether at confession or any other time."—"Since you make me easy on that score," quoth Chappelet, "I will speak out. I am as pure, in that respect, as when I first came into the world."

"God bless my son," said the friar, "you have done well; and this is so much the more meritorious, as you have liberties far beyond us, of doing otherwise; but," he added, "were you never given to gluttony?" Chappelet answered with a groan, "Yes, very often; for besides fasting in Lent, as all devout persons do, I have accustomed myself to live three days in a week, at least, on bread and water; and I have drunk the water sometimes, especially if I have been fatigued with praying, or performing a pilgrimage, with as much pleasure as drunkards drink wine; and sometimes I have wished for salads, and have eaten my bread with more pleasure than a person ought, who fasts out of devotion."

"My son," replied the friar, "these are very natural and trivial errors, and I would not have you burthen your conscience more than is necessary: all men, be they ever so holy, eat with a good appetite after fasting, and drink with pleasure when they have been fatigued."

"Do not tell me these things to comfort me only," said Chappelet; "you know I cannot be ignorant, that whatever relates to the service of God, should be done sincerely, and with a good will, otherwise we are guilty of sin."—"I am well satisfied," returned the friar, "in your being of that opinion, and much approve the purity of your conscience: but tell me, have you not been guilty of the sin of covetousness, desiring more than was fit, or detaining what was not your due?"

"I would not have you think so," said Chappelet, "because

you see me in the house with these usurers: I have no concern with them, but came purely to persuade them to leave off that abominable way of living; and I believe I might have prevailed, had it not pleased God to visit me in this manner. My father left me a plentiful fortune, and I immediately disposed of the greater part of it to religious uses; and betook myself to trade for a maintenance, and to have it in my power to relieve the poor in Christ: I cannot say, indeed, that I have not been desirous of gain; but I always gave half to the poor, and kept the other part for my own necessary occasions; and God has so far blessed me, that my affairs have always prospered."

"You have done well," said the confessor, "but have you not been often transported with anger and passion?" "Very often truly!" answered the penitent, "but who can forbear, seeing the common degeneracy of mankind, who are every day breaking the commandments of God, and are not kept in awe by his judgements? I could rather choose to be out of the world, than to see youth run after vanity, swear and forswear, haunt taverns, neglect going to church, and follow the ways of the world before those of God."

"My son," said the friar, "passion here is commendable; nor shall I enjoin you any penance for it: but have you been transported by rage at no time, to murder, or use indecent expressions, or to do any other injury?"

"Alas, sir!" answered Chappelet, "how can you, who appear to be so good a man, mention any such thing! Do you believe, had I ever entertained such thoughts, that God would have suffered me to live? these are the actions of robbers and villains, whom I never look upon without offering up a prayer to God for their conversion."

"God bless you again, my dear child," said the good old man: "but have you never borne false witness against, or spoken ill of another, or taken away that from him which properly belonged to him?"

"Yes, reverend father," answered he, "I must needs confess I have spoken ill of another, for I had once a neighbour, who used to beat his wife without cause; and I gave him a bad character to her parents; so much did I pity the poor woman, who was always ill treated by him, as often as he got drunk."

"But," said the friar, "you tell me you have been a merchant, did you never cheat any person, as is common for them to do?"

"Yes, in good truth, sir," he replied, "but I know only of one person, who, having brought the money for a piece of cloth which I had sold him, I put it into a bag without counting it, and at the month's end, when I came to tell it over, I found fourpence too much; but as I was not able to find the owner again, after keeping it a year, I gave it to the poor."

"This is a mere trifle," said the friar, "and you did well to dispose of it in that manner." He then put some other questions, which Chappelet answered as he had done the rest; and just as he was proceeding to absolution, Chappelet cried out, "There is another thing hangs upon me, which I have not confessed." The priest inquired what it was; and he answered, "I remember once making my maid clean the house on a holiday; and I have not showed that regard for the Lord's day which I ought." "Oh!" said the friar, "that is a small matter, my son." "Do not call it so, dear father," quoth the other, "Sunday is a day much to be reverenced, being the day on which our Lord rose from the dead."

"Well," said the priest, "is there anything more?"

"Yes," answered he, "I remember, once in my life, to have spat in the house of God." The friar smiled, and said, "My son, that is not to be regarded; we ourselves spit there every day." "And you are much to blame for it," returned he, "for nothing should be kept so clean as the temple of God, where we offer sacrifice." In short, he told him many more things of that kind, and at last, as he could weep when he pleased, he fell groaning and sobbing, as though he would burst his very heart. "My son, what is the matter?" said the friar. "Alas, sir!" he answered: "there is one sin left behind, which I could never endure to confess, the shame to mention it is so great, and as often as I recollect it I lament in the manner you now see; nay I am convinced that God will never forgive it."

"Go, go, my son," quoth the friar, "what is that you say? I tell you, that if all the wickedness that ever was committed by man, or can be committed whilst the world endures, was to be amassed in one person, if that person was thoroughly penitent, as I see you are, so great is God's mercy, that upon confession, it would all be forgiven him; tell me then what it is."

"Alas! father," said Chappelet, shedding abundance of tears, "my sin is so heinous, that I despair altogether of pardon, unless you assist me, and move God by your prayers."

"Speak out, then," said the friar, "and I promise to intercede for you." Chappelet still kept weeping, and would say nothing; the priest exhorting him all the while to clear his conscience. At last, after the penitent had held his confessor some time in suspense, he fetched a deep sigh, and said: "Since you have promised to pray for me, I will disclose it, you must know then, that when I was a child, I once cursed my mother;" and here he began to lament afresh in a most grievous manner.

"My good son," said the friar, "does this seem so great a sin? men are cursing God every day, yet he pardons them upon repentance; and do you think you shall never be forgiven? weep not: but let this be your comfort, that though you had even a hand in nailing Christ upon the cross, yet would that sin be forgiven on such a repentance as yours."

"What do you say?" quoth Chappelet; "what! to curse my dearest mother, who bore me day and night in her womb for nine months, and suckled me many hundreds of times at her breast! No, the sin is so great, that I must inevitably perish, unless your prayers prevent it."

The friar finding he had no more to say, absolved and gave him his benediction; and, supposing that he had spoken truth all the while, thought him the most pious man living. And, indeed, who could think otherwise, having it all from a dying man? He afterwards said to him, "Master Chappelet, by God's assistance you will soon recover; but if it should please the Almighty to take your blessed and well-disposed soul unto himself, will you give leave for your body to be buried in our convent?"

"I would have it laid nowhere else," he answered, "both because you have promised to pray for me, and as I have always had a great regard for your order; therefore, when you go home I beg you will take care, that the real body of our Lord, which was consecrated at your altar this morning, may be brought to me; for, unworthy as I am, I intend, with your leave, to receive it, and after that extreme unction; so that though I have been a great sinner all my life, I may die at least like a Christian." The holy man was much pleased, told him that he said well, and promised that it should be brought that day; and so it was.

The brothers being a little suspicious that he intended to impose upon them, had posted themselves behind a partition of the room, where they heard all that passed; insomuch that they could scarcely refrain from laughing; and said one

to another, "What a strange fellow this is! whom neither age, sickness, fear of death, which is at hand, nor of God, at whose tribunal he must shortly appear, is sufficient to deter from his wicked courses, or to prevent his dying as he has always lived!" But as he had obtained burial in the church by that means, they cared no farther.

Chappelet then received the sacrament, and growing worse and worse had extreme unction, and died the evening that he had made this extraordinary confession. The brothers took immediate care that he should be honourably interred, and sent forthwith to the convent to desire they would come, as was usual, and perform vigils and matins for the deceased: and the friar, to whom he had confessed, went upon this notice to the prior, and had a chapter called, when he informed them how holy a person Chappelet was, as he could easily perceive by his confession: and hoping that God would work many miracles by him, he urged them to receive his body with all due reverence and devotion. To this the prior and the credulous brotherhood all consented, and that night they came in a body to the place where the corpse lay, and sang the great and solemn vigils; and in the morning they all went for the body in their hoods and surplices, with books in their hands, and the cross carried before them, singing all the way. They brought it with the utmost solemnity to their church, being followed by the whole city; and having set it down there, the good confessor mounted a pulpit, and told them wonderful things concerning the life of the deceased, his fastings, charity, simplicity, innocence, and sanctity; speaking more particularly of that great crime, which he had confessed with so much concern, as scarcely to be persuaded that God would forgive him. Thence he took occasion to reprove his audience, exclaiming: "Yet you, wicked as you are, make no scruple to curse God, the holy mother of God, and all the host of heaven, for the least trifle." He flourished much concerning his truth and purity; and worked so far upon them by his discourse, to which all yielded an implicit faith, that when the service was ended they pressed forward to kiss the hands and feet of the deceased; and the funeral clothes were immediately rent to pieces, every one thinking himself happy who could get a single rag. All that day he was kept, so that every one might see and visit him; and at night he was most honourably interred in a marble sepulchre. On the following day there was a great procession of devout persons, to worship at his

shrine with lighted tapers, and to offer the waxen images which they had vowed. And such was the fame of his sanctity, and people's devotion towards him, that nobody in time of trouble would apply to any other saint but him, calling him St. Chappelet, and affirming, that God had wrought many miracles by him, and still continued to work them for such as recommended themselves devoutly to him.

Thus lived and died master Capperello da Prato, and became a saint, as you have heard, of whom I will not pronounce it impossible that he may be happy; for though his whole life could not be worse, it is not impossible, but, before the hour of his death, he might be such a penitent, that God should have mercy on him, and receive him into his kingdom. But as this we know nothing of, we have much more reason, from what appears, to conclude that he is more probably in the hands of the devil in purgatory, than amongst the angels in Paradise. And if it be so, great is God's mercy towards us; who, not regarding our errors, but the purity of our intention, whenever we make choice of an improper mediator, hears us as well as if we had applied to one truly a saint. And therefore, that this grace may preserve us in our present calamity, and in this cheerful and agreeable society, let us praise his name, as we first began; recommending ourselves to him in time of need, with a full assurance of being always heard.

NOVEL II.

Abraham the Jew, at the instigation of Jeannot de Chivigni, goes to the court of Rome, and seeing the wickedness of the clergy there returns to Paris, and becomes a Christian.

Some parts of Pamfilo's story made them laugh heartily, and the whole was much commended by the ladies, who had been very attentive; and, as it was now ended, the queen ordered Neiphile, in the next seat to her, to go on in the manner prescribed. That lady, being as affable in behaviour as her person was beautiful, very cheerfully complied, and began in this manner:

Pamfilo has showed us, in his novel, the great goodness of God in not regarding any errors of ours, which proceed from the blindness and imperfection of our nature. I intend to

set forth in mine, how the same goodness of God displays itself in the most plain and evident manner, by bearing with the vices of those persons, who, though bound to give testimony concerning it, both in their words and actions yet do the reverse—a truth by which we may be taught more steadily to persevere in what we believe.

At Paris there lived, as I have been told, a great merchant, and worthy man called Jeannot de Chivigni, a dealer in silk, and an intimate friend to a certain rich Jew, whose name was Abraham, a merchant also, and a very honest man. Jeannot, being no stranger to Abraham's good and upright intentions, was greatly troubled that the soul of so wise and well-meaning a person should perish through his unbelief. He began, therefore, in the most friendly manner, to entreat him to renounce the errors of Judaism, and embrace the truth of Christianity, which he might plainly see flourishing more and more, and as being the most wise and holy institution, gaining ground, whereas the religion of the Jews was dwindling to nothing. Abraham answered, that he esteemed no religion like his own; he was born in it, and in it he intended to live and die; nor could anything make him alter his resolution. All this did not hinder Jeannot from beginning the same arguments over again in a few days, and setting forth, in as awkward a manner as a merchant must be supposed to do, for what reasons our religion ought to be preferred; and though the Jew was well read in their law, yet, whether it was his regard to the man, or that Jeannot had the spirit of God upon his tongue, he began to be greatly pleased with his arguments; but continued obstinate, nevertheless, in his own creed, and would not suffer himself to be converted. Jeannot, on the other hand, was no less persevering in his earnest solicitations, insomuch that the Jew was overcome by them at last, and said: "Look you, Jeannot, you are very desirous I should become a Christian, and I am so much disposed to do as you would have me, that I intend in the first place to go to Rome, to see him whom you call God's vicar on earth, and to consider his ways a little, and those of his brother cardinals. If they appear to me in such a light that I may be able to comprehend by them, and by what you have said, that your religion is better than mine, as you would persuade me, I will then become a Christian; otherwise I will continue a Jew as I am."

When Jeannot heard this he was much troubled, and said to himself: "I have lost all my labour, which I thought well

bestowed, expecting to have converted this man; for should he go to Rome, and see the wickedness of the clergy there, so far from turning Christian, were he one already, he would certainly again become a Jew." Then addressing Abraham, he said: "Nay, my friend, why should you be at the great trouble and expense of such a journey? Not to mention the dangers, both by sea and land, to which so rich a person as yourself must be exposed, do you think to find nobody here that can baptize you? Or if you have any doubts and scruples, where will you meet with abler men than are here to clear them up for you, and to answer such questions as you shall put to them? You may take it for granted that the prelates yonder are like those you see in France, only so much the better as they are nearer to the principal pastor. Then let me advise you to spare yourself the trouble of this journey, until such time as you may want some pardon or indulgence, and then I may probably bear you company."

"I believe it is as you say," replied the Jew; "but the long and the short of the matter is, that I am fully resolved, if you would have me do what you have so much solicited, to go thither; else I will in no wise comply."

Jeannot seeing him determined, said, "God be with you!' and, supposing that he would never be a Christian after he had seen Rome, gave him over for lost. The Jew took horse, and made the best of his way to Rome, where he was most honourably received by his brethren, the Jews; and, without saying a word of what he was come about, he began to look narrowly into the manner of living of the pope, the cardinals, and other prelates, and of the whole court; and, from what he himself perceived, being a person of keen observation, and from what he gathered from others, he found that, from the highest to the lowest, they were given to all sorts of lewdness, without the least shame or remorse; so that the only way to obtain anything considerable was, by applying to prostitutes of every description. He observed, also, that they were generally drunkards and gluttons, and, like brutes, more solicitous about their bellies than anything else. Inquiring farther, he found them all such lovers of money, that they would not only buy and sell man's blood in general, but even the blood of Christians, and sacred things, of what kind soever, whether benefices, or pertaining to the altar; that they drove as great a trade in this way, as there is in selling cloth and other commodities at Paris; that to palpable simony they had given the plausible name of procuration,

and debaucheries they called supporting the body; as if God had been totally unacquainted with their wicked intentions, and, like men, was to be imposed upon by the names of things. These and other things which I shall pass over, gave great offence to the Jew, who was a sober and modest person; and now thinking he had seen enough, he returned home.

As soon as Jeannot heard of his arrival he went to see him, thinking of nothing so little as of his conversion. They received one another with a great deal of pleasure; and in a day or two, after the traveller had recovered from his fatigue, Jeannot began to inquire of him what he thought of the holy father, the cardinals, and the rest of the court? The Jew immediately answered: "To me it seems as if God was much kinder to them than they deserve; for, if I may be allowed to judge, I must be bold to tell you, that I have neither seen sanctity, devotion, or anything good in the clergy of Rome; but, on the contrary, luxury, avarice, gluttony, and worse than these, if worse things can be, are so much in fashion with all sorts of people, that I should rather esteem the court of Rome to be a forge, if you allow the expression, for diabolical operations than things divine; and, for what I can perceive, your pastor, and consequently the rest, strive with their whole might and skill to overthrow the Christian religion, and to drive it from off the face of the earth, even where they ought to be its chief succour and support. But as I do not see this come to pass, which they so earnestly aim at; on the contrary, that your religion gains strength, and becomes every day more glorious; I plainly perceive that it is upheld by the Spirit of God, as the most true and holy of all. For which reason, though I continued obstinate to your exhortations, nor would suffer myself to be converted by them, now I declare to you, that I will no longer defer being made a Christian. Let us go then to the church, and do you take care that I be baptized according to the manner of your holy faith."

Jeannot, who expected a quite different conclusion, was the most overjoyed man that could be; and taking his friend to our Lady's church at Paris, he requested the priests there to baptize him, which was done forthwith. Jeannot being his sponsor, gave him the name of John, and afterwards took care to have him well instructed in our faith, in which he made

a speedy proficiency, and became, in time, a good and holy man.

[This story is related as having really happened, by Benvenuto da Imola, in his 'Commentary on Dante,' which was written in 1376, but none of which was ever printed, except a few passages quoted by Muratori in his Italian Antiquities.]

NOVEL III.

Melchizedeck, a Jew, by a story of three rings, escapes a most dangerous snare, which Saladin had prepared for him.

THIS novel having been universally applauded, Filomena thus began:—Neiphile's story put me in mind of a ticklish case that befell a certain Jew; for as enough has been said concerning God and the truth of our religion, it will not be amiss if we descend to the actions of men. I proceed, therefore, to the relation of a thing, which may make you more cautious for the time to come, in answering questions that shall be put to you. For you must know, that as a man's folly often brings him down from the most exalted state of life to the greatest misery, so shall his good sense secure him in the midst of the utmost danger, and procure him a safe and honourable repose. There are many instances of people being brought to misery by their own folly, but these I choose to omit, as they happen daily; what I purpose to exemplify, in the following short novel, is the great cause for comfort to be found in the possession of a good understanding.

Saladin was so brave and great a man, that he had raised himself from an inconsiderable station, to be Sultan of Babylon, and had gained many victories over both Turkish and Christian princes. This monarch, having in divers wars, and by many extraordinary expenses, run through all his treasure, some urgent occasion fell out that he wanted a large sum of money. Not knowing which way he might raise enough to answer his necessities, he at last called to mind a rich Jew of Alexandria, named Melchizedeck, who let out money at interest. Him he believed to have wherewithal to serve him; but then he was so covetous, that he would never do it willingly, and Saladin was loath to force him. But as necessity has no law, after much thinking which way the matter might best be effected, he at last resolved to use force under some colour of reason. He therefore sent for

the Jew, received him in a most gracious manner, and making him sit down, thus addressed him: "Worthy man, I hear from divers persons that thou art very wise and knowing in religious matters; wherefore I would gladly know from thee which religion thou judgest to be the true one, viz., the Jewish, the Mahometan, or the Christian?" The Jew (truly a wise man) found that Saladin had a mind to trap him, and must gain his point should he exalt any one of the three religions above the others; after considering, therefore, for a little how best to avoid the snare, his ingenuity at last supplied him with the following answer:

"The question which your Highness has proposed is very curious; and, that I may give you my sentiments, I must beg leave to tell a short story. I remember often to have heard of a great and rich man, who among his most rare and precious jewels, had a ring of exceeding beauty and value. Being proud of possessing a thing of such worth, and desirous that it should continue for ever in his family, he declared, by will, that to whichsoever of his sons he should give this ring, him he designed for his heir, and that he should be respected as the head of the family. That son to whom the ring was given, made the same law with respect to his descendants, and the ring passed from one to another in long succession, till it came to a person who had three sons, all virtuous and dutiful to their father, and all equally beloved by him. Now the young men knowing what depended upon the ring, and ambitious of superiority, began to entreat their father, who was now grown old, every one for himself, that he would give the ring to him. The good man, equally fond of all, was at a loss which to prefer; and, as he had promised all, and wished to satisfy all, he privately got an artist to make two other rings, which were so like the first, that he himself scarcely knew the true one. When he found his end approaching, he secretly gave one ring to each of his sons; and they, after his death, all claimed the honour and estate, each disputing with his brothers, and producing his ring; and the rings were found so much alike, that the true one could not be distinguished. To law then they went, as to which should succeed, nor is that question yet decided. And thus it has happened, my Lord, with regard to the three laws given by God the Father, concerning which you proposed your question: every one believes he is the true heir of God, has his law, and obeys his commandments; but which is in the right is uncertain, in like manner as with the rings."

Saladin perceived that the Jew had very cleverly escaped the net which was spread for him: he therefore resolved to discover his necessity to him, and see if he would lend him money, telling him at the same time what he had designed to do, had not that discreet answer prevented him. The Jew freely supplied the monarch with what he wanted; and Saladin afterwards paid him back in full, made him large presents, besides maintaining him nobly at his court, and was his friend as long as he lived.

[This novel probably originated in some rabbinical tradition. We are told, in the 'Menagiana,' that some persons believed that Boccaccio's story of the rings gave rise to the report concerning the book 'De Tribus Impostoribus,' about which there has been so much controversy. Boccaccio's novel furnished the foundation for the plot of Nathan the Wise, the masterpiece of Lessing, the greater founder of the German drama.]

NOVEL IV.

A Monk having committed an offence, for which he ought to have been punished, saves himself by wittily proving his Abbot guilty of the very same fault.

THUS ended Filomena, when Dioneo, who sat next to her (without waiting the queen's order, as knowing that he was to follow in course), spoke as follows:

If I understand you right, ladies, we are assembled here to amuse ourselves by telling stories: whilst nothing, then, is done contrary to this intention, I suppose every one has liberty to relate what he thinks will be most entertaining: therefore, having heard how, by the pious admonitions of Jeannot de Chivigni, Abraham the Jew was advised to his soul's salvation; and also how Melchizedeck, by his good sense, saved his wealth from the designs of Saladin; I shall without fear of reproof, show, in a few words, how cunningly a monk saved his bones from the punishment intended him.

There was once, in the territories of Lunigiana, a monastery, better stored both with monks and religion than many are now-a-days; and among its inmates was a young monk, whose lusty vigour neither fasting nor praying could mortify. Now it chanced one day, about noon, whilst his brethren were all asleep, that taking a walk about their church, which stood in a lonesome place, he cast his eye upon a good looking wench, some labourer's daughter apparently, who was

gathering herbs in the fields. Assailed at the first glance by carnal concupiscence, he went up and accosted her, and talked to such purpose that she agreed to go to his cell with him, before anybody was stirring abroad to see them. But whilst they were diverting themselves together, with more eagerness than caution, it happened that the abbot woke up, and hearing, as he passed the cell, the noise made by the pair within, he laid his ear to the door to listen, and plainly distinguished a woman's voice. At first he was inclined to command that the door should be opened; but on second thoughts he returned to his chamber to wait till the monk should come out.

The latter, meanwhile, though highly delighted with his companion, could not help being a little suspicious of a discovery; and fancying that he heard footsteps at the door, he peeped through a crevice, saw the abbot standing to listen, and knew that he was detected, and should be soundly punished. This caused him extreme uneasiness; yet, without showing anything of it to the girl, he set his wits to work to contrive how he might get clear of the affair, and at last hit on a stratagem which succeeded to his heart's desire. Pretending that he could stay no longer—"I must go," he said to the girl, "and will contrive a way to get you off without being seen; lie still, then, till I return."—He then locked the door after him, carried the key to the abbot, as is usual with the brethren when they go out of doors; and, putting a good face on the matter,—"My Lord," he said, "I could not get all my wood home this morning, and if you please, I will go now and fetch the remainder." The abbot, readily inferring that the young monk was unconscious of having been detected, was glad to have such an opportunity to make a more perfect discovery; accordingly he took the key, and gave the required leave. No sooner was the other departed, than he began to consider what he had best do in this case; whether to open the door in presence of all the monks, that so, the offence being known to all, they could have no room to murmur when he proceeded to punishment: or, whether he should not rather inquire of the damsel herself, how she had been brought thither. Supposing, also, that she might be the wife or daughter of some one whom he would not have disgraced in that public manner, he thought it best to see first who she was, and then come to some resolution. So stepping very softly to the cell, he went in, and locked the door after him.

The girl, on seeing him, was in great confusion, and fell a weeping; whilst our abbot, finding her to be young and handsome, was seized (old as he was) with the same desires as the young monk had been, and began to reason thus with himself: "Why should I not take a little pleasure when I may have it? for of plague and trouble I know enough every day. She is handsome, and nobody can ever know it. If I can persuade her, I see no reason why I should not. Who will ever be the wiser? nobody; and a sin concealed is half forgiven. Such another chance may never fall in my way, and I hold it best to take what heaven sends whilst I can have it." Upon this, his original purpose being quite changed, he drew nearer to the girl, and began to comfort her, desiring her not to weep. Making some farther advances, he acquainted her, at last, with his intention; and she, who was made neither of flint nor steel, readily allowed the abbot to have his will. So after hugging and kissing her, his lordship lay down first on the monk's bed—by way of encouraging her no doubt, and in tender consideration for her youth, lest she should be overwhelmed by the weight of his dignity—and then he gently drew her down over him.

The monk, meanwhile, who under pretence of going to the wood, had concealed himself in the dormitory, on seeing the abbot go alone to his chamber, began to have great hopes of the success of his scheme; but felt certain of it when he saw his lordship lock the door behind him. Then coming out cautiously from his hiding place, he heard and saw through a chink in the door all that passed between them.

At last, the abbot, after he had stayed as long as he thought fit, came out, locked the door again, and returned to his chamber; and supposing the monk to be now come from the wood, he resolved to reprimand and imprison him, so that his lordship might have the girl all to himself. He sent, therefore, for the culprit, gave him a severe rebuke, and ordered him to prison. The monk answered, very readily,—"My lord abbot, I have not been so long of the Benedictine order, as to be yet acquainted with its rules in every particular: your lordship instructed me well in the observance of fasts and vigils; but never told me that monks ought to yield the pre-eminence to women, and humble themselves beneath them. However, as you have so lately set me an example, I promise, if you will forgive me, to follow it, and always to do in future as I have seen you do." The abbot being quick of apprehension, found the monk knew more than he ex-

pected; and being ashamed to punish him for a crime of which himself was known to be guilty, he pardoned him on condition of his silence. They then had the girl conveyed privately out of the monastery, and the story goes that they afterwards found means many a time to have her in again.

NOVEL V.

The Marchioness of Monferrat, by a repast consisting of hens, and a witty reply, cures the King of France of his dishonourable love.

DIONEO's story at first put all the ladies to the blush; but looking at each other as he went on, they could hardly keep from bursting out laughing. They refrained, however, and when he had done, they intimated to him, with a gentle reprimand, that such tales should not be told in the presence of ladies. The queen then nodded to Fiametta, who sat next, to take her turn, which she did most cheerfully as follows:—It is no little joy to me, to find the force of smart and witty replies so well set forth in what has already passed among us. Now, as it is accounted a mark of good sense in men, to aim at ladies of superior quality to themselves; so it is no less a token of the greatest discretion in women, to take care never to be surprised in love by men of higher degree. For which reason I shall now relate, how a woman by her wit and address may ward off an attack of that kind, when there is a design upon her honour.

The Marquis of Monferrat was a person of great valour, and being standard-bearer to the church, had gone abroad in a general crusade of the Christian princes against the Turks. One day, as they were discoursing of his prowess at the court of Philip, surnamed the Short-sighted, who was preparing in France for the like expedition, a courtier said, in the king's presence, that the whole world had not so accomplished a pair as the marquis and his lady; for as much as he excelled other cavaliers in valour, so much was she superior to the rest of her sex in worth and beauty. These words so affected the king, that, from that very moment, though he had never seen her, he began to be passionately in love. He resolved to go by land as far as Genoa, that he might have an honourable pretence for paying her a visit, thinking that, as the marquis was absent, he could not fail of accomplishing his desires. With this design, having

sent the greatest part of his company before him, he set forward with a small retinue, and being come within a day's journey of the lady's abode, he sent her word, that on the morrow she might expect his company at dinner. The lady very cheerfully replied, that she should esteem it a singular favour, and would make him heartily welcome. For a long while she could not conceive why so great a prince should come to see her, when her husband was from home; but supposing at last that the fame of her beauty must have drawn him thither, she resolved nevertheless, as she was of a noble spirit, to show him due respect: for which purpose she summoned the principal gentry, who were left in the country, to consult them about what was necessary for his reception, reserving the entire management of the feast to herself. Then, buying up all the hens that were in the country, she ordered the cooks to get nothing else for his majesty's dinner, but to dress them in as many different ways as possible.

Next day the king came, and was received by the lady with great joy, and had all due honor paid him; and finding her exceed even what had been said before in her favor, he was greatly astonished. He then retired awhile into the apartments, which had been provided for him, to repose himself; and when dinner was ready, his majesty and the lady sat down at one table, and their attendants at other tables, all placed according to their respective qualities. Here the king was served with dishes one after another, and with the most costly wines, feasting his eyes yet more with the sight of the lady; and highly delighted he was with his entertainment. But observing at last that all the different courses, however dressed up and variously cooked, were nothing but hens, he began to wonder much, for he knew that the country about was well stored with venison and wild fowl, and he had signified his intention time enough for them to have provided both. Turning, therefore, a merry countenance to the lady, "Madam," he said, "are hens only bred in this country, and no cocks?" The lady, who well understood the meaning of his question, now thinking that she had a fit opportunity of letting him know her sentiments, boldly answered: "Not so, my lord; but women, however they may differ in dress and titles, are the same here as in other places." The king hearing this, immediately found out the meaning of the entertainment; as also what virtue lay couched under her answer. And being sensible that words would be spent in vain on such a lady, and force he

could not use, he therefore judged it more becoming his honour to stifle his ill-conceived passion; and so, without more words (as being afraid of the lady's replies), when dinner was over, that he might shadow his dishonourable coming by a hasty departure, he thanked her for the honour he had received, took his leave, and posted away to Genoa.

NOVEL VI.

A plain honest man, by a casual jest, very shrewdly reproves the hypocrisy of the clergy.

EMILIA, whose turn came next (the witty reproof given by the marchioness to the king of France, being approved by the whole assembly), began in this manner:—I will not conceal a most stinging reproof given by an honest simple man to a most sordid and avaricious monk, which you will both commend and laugh at.

There was, not long since, a friar belonging to the Inquisition, who, though he laboured much to be righteous and zealous for the Christian faith, had yet a much keener eye after those who had full purses, than after those who held heterodox opinions. By his great diligence in this way, he soon found out a person better stored with money than sense. This man, not so much out of profaneness as want of thought, and perhaps overheated with liquor into the bargain, unluckily said to one of his companions, that he had better wine than Christ himself ever drank. This was reported to the inquisitor, and he, understanding that the man's estate was large, and that he was full of money, sent all his myrmidons, had him seized, and began a prosecution, not so much with a design to amend him in matters of faith, as to ease him of part of his money, as he soon did. The man being brought before him, he inquired whether that was true which had been alleged against him. The poor man immediately answered, that it was, and told him in what manner the words were spoken. Thereupon the most holy inquisitor (devoted to St. John with the golden beard) retorted: "What! dost thou make Christ a drunkard, and curious in the choice of wines, like common sots and frequenters of taverns? and now wouldst thou excuse it as a small matter? It may seem so to thee; but I tell thee, should I proceed with the rigour of justice, thou wouldst be burnt alive for it." With these

and such-like words, as if he had to do with a downright atheist, he so terrified the poor wretch, that he was forced to have recourse to a little of St. John's golden grease,—a most sovereign remedy (although it be not mentioned by Galen in his book of medicines) against the pestilential avarice of the clergy, especially of the lesser friars, who are forbidden the use of money. With that unguent the poor man anointed the inquisitor's hands to such purpose, that the fire and faggot, with which he had been threatened, were changed into a cross, which, being yellow and black, seemed like a banner designed for the holy land. The money being paid, he was to stay there for some time, being ordered, by way of penance, to hear mass in the church of the holy cross every morning, to visit the inquisitor also at dinner-time, and to do nothing the rest of the day but what he commanded; all which he performed punctually. One morning it happened, that, during mass, the gospel was read, wherein were these words:—"You shall receive a hundred for one, and so possess eternal life;" words of which he kept fast hold in his memory. That same day he waited on the inquisitor at dinner-time, as he had been commanded, and the latter asked him, whether he had heard mass that morning. "Yes, sir," replied the man very readily. "Hast thou heard anything therein," quoth the inquisitor, "as to which thou art doubtful, or desirous to ask any questions?" "No, surely," said the honest man, "and I believe all that I have heard most steadfastly; only one thing I remember, which occasions great pity in me for you and the rest of your brethren, as to what will become of you in the other world."—"And what are those words, which make you pity us so much?"—"O, good sir," said the man, "do you remember the words of the gospel? 'You shall receive a hundred for one?'"—"Well, what of them?" quoth the inquisitor. "I will tell you, sir—ever since I have been here, have I seen sometimes one, and sometimes two great cauldrons of broth, given out of your great abundance every day to the poor, after you and your brethren have been sufficiently regaled. Now, if for every one of these you are to receive a hundred, you will all of you be drowned in broth!" This set the whole table in a roar, and the inquisitor was quite confounded, knowing it to be a satire upon their great hypocrisy; and were it not that he had been much blamed for his former prosecution, he would have given the man more trouble: he ordered him, therefore, in a rage, to go about his business, and not come near him any more.

NOVEL VII.

Bergamino, by telling a tale of a certain witty person named Primasso, very handsomely reproves the avarice which had lately appeared in Messer Cane della Scala.

EMILIA's pleasant manner, and her agreeable story, made them all laugh heartily, and they highly commended the novel idea struck out by the crusaders. After which Philostrato, who was to speak next, began:—It is a commendable thing, most worthy ladies, to hit a fixed mark; but more so, to see a thing suddenly appearing, as suddenly hit by an archer. The scandalous and most wicked lives of the clergy, furnish matter enough for reproach and raillery, to such as are so disposed, without much thinking upon the matter: and, therefore, though the honest man did well in touching master inquisitor to the quick, with a shaft pointed by the hypocritical charity of the friars, who give that to the poor which they would otherwise either throw away, or give to the hogs; yet is he more to be commended, of whom the last story puts me in mind to speak. This was one who reproved Messer Cane della Scala, a most magnificent person heretofore, of a sudden and unusual kind of avarice, which had lately appeared in him, figuring by other persons in a pretty novel, as follows, that which he intended to say concerning themselves:

Messer Cane della Scala was known all over the world, as well for the wealth with which fortune had blessed him, as for his being one of the greatest and most magnificent lords that had lived in Italy since the days of the emperor Frederick II. He had determined to make a most sumptuous feast at Verona, to which people began to flock from all parts, those especially of the best fashion; when, on a sudden, whatever was the cause, he altered his mind, and making such as came some little amends for their trouble, he sent them away. One person only remained unsatisfied, whose name was Bergamino, a man of incredible wit and ready tongue, who was still in hopes that things would at length turn out to his advantage. But Messer Cane della Scala (having been made to understand, that whatever was given to him was entirely thrown away) neither spoke to, nor took the least notice of him. Bergamino waited some days, and perceiving that no account was made of him, and finding his stock grew low with the expense of horses and servants at the inn,

he became melancholy, yet thought it better to wait a while longer. He had brought three costly suits with him, which had been given him by other lords, for his more splendid appearance at this feast; and as the landlord began to grow importunate, he first pawned one, and staying a little longer, a second, and he had now begun to live upon the credit of the last, resolving when that was spent, to go away. In the meantime it happened that he met with Messer Cane della Scala at dinner, where he presented himself before him with a sorrowful countenance. The other observing this, said, out of mockery, rather than to take any delight in what should come from him: "What is the matter, Bergamino, thou seemest melancholy; what is it all about?" Bergamino, without any premeditation, yet as if he had thought long upon the matter, made a pat reply in the following story:—

"You must understand, sir, that Primasso was a person well skilled in grammar, as well as a good and ready poet, by which means he became so famous, that though his person was not universally known, his fame and character were in every one's mouth. Now it came to pass, that being once at Paris, in a poor condition, as his virtue met with no fortune, being little encouraged by such as were the most able, he heard much talk of the abbot of Cligni, who, next to the pope, was reputed to be the richest prelate of the church: of him it was said, that he always kept a most grand and hospitable court, and all were entertained freely that came thither, provided it was whilst the abbot was at dinner. Primasso hearing this, and being desirous of seeing great and worthy persons, resolved to be a witness of the magnificence of this abbot. He inquired, therefore, how far he dwelt from Paris? Being answered, about six miles, he supposed that, if he set out early in the morning, he should be able to reach thither by dinner. Accordingly he asked the way, and, having nobody to keep him company, lest he should mistake the road, and so come to a place where no victuals could be had, he took three loaves with him, depending upon finding water enough (for a little served him) wherever he went. The loaves he put in his bosom, and he nicked his time so well, that he arrived at the abbot's exactly at the hour of dining; and entering into the great hall, and beholding the number of tables which were laid forth, and the vast preparations making in the kitchens, and everything else getting ready for dinner, he said to himself 'This man is as truly generous as he has always been

reported.' Whilst he was considering these things attentively, the steward of the household ordered water to be brought, and they washed their hands, and sat down every one at his respective table.

"Now it happened that Primasso was placed facing the door where the abbot was to make his entrance. It was the custom in that court, that neither wine, bread, nor any manner of food whatever should be served at any of the tables, till the lord abbot himself was seated. At last the steward, having all things in readiness, acquainted his lord, that nothing now was wanting but his presence. The abbot ordered the door to be thrown open, and, as he was entering the hall, the first person he chanced to cast his eye upon, was Primasso, who being a stranger, and but meanly apparelled, an ungenerous, as well as an unusual thought came into the abbot's mind. 'Behold,' said he to himself, 'to whom I give my substance to be consumed!' And turning back, he ordered the door to be shut again, and inquired of the people within, whether they could give any account of that mean fellow, that sat over against the door: they all answered that they could not. Primasso, who had a kind of a traveller's appetite, and had not been used to fast so long, seeing the abbot did not yet come, took one of the loaves out of his bosom, and began to devour it. The abbot, after he had waited a considerable time, sent one of his servants to see whether the fellow was gone; the servant brought word that he stayed, and was eating bread, which he seemed to have brought with him. 'Let him eat of his own,' replied the abbot, 'if he has it, for he shall taste none of mine to-day.' Gladly would the abbot have had him go away of himself, for he did not think it right to turn him out.

"Primasso had now finished one loaf, and finding the abbot did not yet come, he began with the second, which was again reported to his lordship, who had sent to inquire as before. At length, the abbot not coming, and Primasso having eaten up his second loaf, he now attacked the third. When this news was carried to the abbot, he began to consider with himself in this manner: 'What strange fancy has possessed me to-day? What means this avarice, this scorn that I now show? And who is it that I thus disdain? For many years have I entertained all comers, gentle or simple, poor or rich, and as it has sometimes happened, the most paltry fellows imaginable; yet never before did I grudge it to any, as I do now to this person: surely avarice should have no influence over me in

the case of a poor man. For aught I know, he may be a most extraordinary person, mean as he appears, and however unwilling I have hitherto been to show him respect.' Having argued thus with himself, he would needs know who the stranger was, and, finding him to be Primasso, who was come only to behold his grandeur, and knowing him to be a learned and worthy person, he became quite ashamed, and was desirous of making amends for his illiberal behaviour, by showing him all possible respect. Having feasted him, therefore, to his heart's content, he ordered him to be sumptuously apparelled, and putting money into his pocket, he made him a present of a horse, and left him at full liberty either to stay with him, or to depart at pleasure: wherewith Primasso, being highly satisfied, gave him his most hearty thanks, and returned to Paris on horseback, although he had come thence on foot."

Messer Cane della Scala, who was a man of good understanding, without any farther explanation, easily understood what Bergamino meant to say, and, smiling upon him, replied: "Well have you set forth your necessities and virtue, as well as my avarice; and truly I never found myself so overpowered with that vice, as now in your case: but I will drive it out of me with the stick with which you have supplied me." So he ordered Bergamino's landlord to be paid his full charges, put on him a suit of his own best clothes, gave him money in his pocket, and a good horse to ride, and left it to his own choice whether to depart, or stay there with him.

NOVEL VIII.

Gulielmo Borsiere, by a few smart words, checks the miserable covetousness of M. Ermino de' Grimaldi.

LAURETTA, who sat next to Filostrato, hearing them commend Bergamino's wit and perseverance, and knowing that it was now her turn, without waiting for any command, began in this manner:—The last story puts me in mind how a witty courtier reproved, to good purpose, the covetousness of a certain rich merchant. The story, although it may resemble the other, will not be the less agreeable, as it tends to as good an end.

There lived, some time ago, at Genoa, a gentleman named Signior Ermino de' Grimaldi, who, as was generally believed

surpassed all the people of Italy in estate and wealth; and, as no Italian could equal him in riches, so neither was there in the whole world one like him for greediness and sordid avarice. For, so far was he from being a friend to others, that he even denied himself common necessaries; contrary to the custom of the Genoese, who delight to dress and live well. On which account he had lost his true name of Grinaldi, and was now known by no other than that of Ermino Avarizia. It came to pass, that, whilst by spending nothing, he went on accumulating wealth, there came to Genoa, Gulielmo Borsiere, a well-bred and witty gentleman, one wholly unlike the debauched reprobates of the present day, who would fain be reputed fine gentlemen, but should more properly style themselves asses, their breeding being that of the filth and sink of mankind, rather than of courts. And whereas, in former days, they spent their time in making up differences between gentlemen, or in bringing about alliances by marriage, affinity, or friendship; and would divert themselves, and those about them, with facetious and witty repartees, and at the same time, like kind fathers, reprove and lash such as deserved it, although with little recompense: these upstarts of the present age employ their whole life, in speaking ill of their neighbours, and sowing dissentions among them, in lying and slandering, and what is worse, doing this in the presence of any one; for they allege all sorts of shameful misdeeds of everybody, true or not true, upon the least occasion; and, by their false and deceitful flatteries, they bring gentlemen at last to everything that is vile and wicked. We see, too, that he is most caressed by the untoward nobles of our day, who uses the most wicked expressions and commits the vilest actions, to the eternal shame of the present age, and a manifest proof that virtue is gone out from among us, and has left us wallowing in the sink of debauchery. But to return from this digression into which a just resentment has led me farther than I intended.

This Gulielmo, whom I before mentioned, was much respected and gladly welcomed by the better sort of people at Genoa. He once made some stay here, and hearing much talk of Ermino's sordidness, he became desirous of seeing him. Now Ermino had been informed of Gulielmo's worthy character, and having, with all his covetousness, some small sparks of gentility, he received him in a very courteous manner. After some discourse, he took his visitor, and some Genoese who came along with him, to see a fine house which

he had lately built; and when he had showed every part of it, "Pray, sir," he said, "can you, who have heard and seen so much, tell me of something that has never yet been seen, to have painted in my hall?" To this absurd question, Gulielmo replied, "Sir, I can tell you of nothing which has never yet been seen, that I know of, unless it be sneezing, or something of that sort; but, if you please, I can tell you of a thing which, I believe, you never saw." "Do, pray," said Ermino (little expecting such an answer as he received), "let me know what that is." Gulielmo immediately replied, "Paint Liberality." When Ermino heard this, such a sudden shame seized him, as wrought a complete change in his disposition. "Sir," he said, "I will have her painted in such a manner, that neither you, nor any one else, shall be able to say, hereafter, that I am unacquainted with her." And from that time, such effect had Gulielmo's words upon him, he became a most liberal and courteous gentleman, and was the most respected, both by strangers and his fellow-citizens, of any in Genoa.

NOVEL IX.

The King of Cyprus was so much affected by the words of a gentlewoman of Gascogne, that from being a worthless prince he became very virtuous.

THE queen's last command rested on Eliza, who, without waiting for it, began in this manner:—It often happens that a desirable change, which much pains and many reproofs have failed to effect, is happily brought about by a word thrown in by chance, and without any such design. We have had an instance of this in the novel recited by Lauretta; and I purpose, also, in a very short story, to demonstrate the same thing. A good saying may often be of service, and ought to be duly regarded, whoever the person be that utters it.

During the reign of the first King of Cyprus, after the conquest of the Holy Land, by Godfrey of Boulogne, it happened that a gentlewoman of Gascogne went on a pilgrimage to visit the holy sepulchre, and, on her return home, being arrived at Cyprus, she was ill-treated by a parcel of villains. Having made her complaint without receiving any redress, she resolved at length to go to the king, but was told, that she would only lose her labour, for he was so careless in

every respect, and so little of a man, that, far from avenging the injuries done to others, he suffered an infinite number of the most shameful affronts to be offered to himself; insomuch that whoever were offended at him might vent their resentment at any time in the most opprobrious language. On hearing this she entirely despaired of redress; nevertheless she proposed, as some comfort to herself in her calamity, to upbraid the King for his meanness of spirit. Coming, therefore, all in tears before him she said, "My lord, I appear in your presence not expecting to be revenged for the injuries I have sustained: but this small satisfaction I entreat, that you would tell me how you can bear those which I hear are committed towards yourself, that I may thence be instructed patiently to bear my own, which, God knows, were it in my power, I would willingly consign to you, since you endure such things so well." The king, who till that hour had been dull and inactive, as if now he had been roused from a long sleep, began, with avenging that lady's wrongs in the strictest manner, and from that time forward he was most zealous in the punishment of every one who dared to do anything contrary to the honour of his crown.

NOVEL X.

Master Albert, of Bologna, puts a lady to the blush, who thought to have done as much by him, because she perceived him to be amorously inclined towards her.

After Eliza had finished, the last tale remained to be told by the queen, who, in the most becoming manner, began as follows:—Most virtuous ladies; as the stars are the ornament of heaven when the air is clear, and as flowers embellish the meadow in the spring, so lively sallies and appropriate anecdotes constitute the charm of polite conversation; and these are, from their very brevity, better suited to women than men, forasmuch as many words, when fewer would serve the purpose, are more unbecoming in our sex than in them. It is true there are few women now who understand anything that is smart and witty when they hear it; or, if they do understand, they scarcely know how to make a reply; which is much to the disgrace of our sex. For that culture which adorned the minds of women in former times, is devoted in our days to the body; and she whose habit is

most gaudy, and set off with embroideries and fantastic ornaments, is most esteemed; not considering that, were you to load an ass with that finery, it would be able to carry more than any women, and, therefore, in that particular, they deserve not so much respect as the ass. I am ashamed to mention these things, because, whilst I censure other women, I am taxing myself. Such showy painted things, what are they else but statues, dull and insensible? or if they answer a question, they had better have been silent. Truly, they would have you think, that their not knowing how to converse with men of sense proceeds from their simplicity and purity of mind, and therefore they call their own foolishness by the name of modesty; as if there were no other honest woman but she who converses with her chambermaid, laundress, or kitchen-women; and as if nature designed them no other kind of conversation. Most sure it is, that in this, as well as in other things, you are to consider when, where, and with whom, you speak: for sometimes it happens, that a man or woman, intending by some jest or other to put a person to the blush, without having compared their strength of wit with that of the other person, may find it recoil upon themselves. Therefore, that we may be always upon our guard, and not verify the proverb which is in every one's mouth, That women always choose the worst, I desire that this day's last novel, which is to come from myself, may make us all wise; to the end that, as we are distinguished from others by birth and quality, we may not be behind them in discreetness of behaviour.

It is not long since there was living at Bologna (and perhaps he may be there still), a physician of extraordinary note in his profession, called Master Albert, one of so sprightly a disposition, though he was nearly seventy years old, that notwithstanding his natural heat and vigour had quite forsaken him, yet disdained he not to receive the sparks of love. For having seen, at an entertainment, a most beautiful lady, a widow, called, as some say, Madam Malgherida de' Ghisolieri, he was no less smitten than if he had been a younger person: nor could he rest at nights, unless he had seen the fair one by day. This made him pass backwards and forwards, sometimes on foot, and sometimes on horseback, so often before her door, that she, and some other ladies of her acquaintance, could not help taking notice of it; and would often make themselves merry to see a person of his years and learning so ridiculously amorous;

supposing love to be a passion peculiar to young people. Master Albert continuing his marches to and fro by the house, it happened, on a festival, that this lady was sitting at the door with some of her friends, and seeing him come at a distance, they all agreed to receive him handsomely, and afterwards to rally him on his passion. They rose up, therefore, and invited him into a pleasant room, where he was entertained with rich wine and sweetmeats; and at length they began to inquire of him, as modestly as possible, how he could ever think of being in love with so fine a lady, seeing how much she had been solicited by many brisk, gay young gentlemen. Master Albert, perceiving that they had drawn him in among them, only to make a jest of him, put a merry countenance on the matter, and replied:

"Madam, it should seem no strange thing to any considerate person, that I am in love, especially with you, because you so well deserve it. And though the power be taken away by age, yet is the will remaining, as also the judgment to distinguish those who are most worthy of our affection; and this in a greater degree, as age has more knowledge than youth. The hope that prompted me, who am old, to love you, who are courted by so many younger persons, is this; I have often, at an afternoon's collation, observed ladies eating lupines and leeks, and though in the leek there be no goodness at all, yet is the head least hurtful, as well as most agreeable to the taste: but you, guided by a wrong appetite, will generally hold the head between your fingers, and eat the stalk, which is not only good for nothing, but has also a bad relish. Suppose, therefore, you choose a lover in the same manner; I shall be the happy person, and the rest of your lovers all discarded." The lady was in some confusion, as well as her companions; and she said to him, "Sir, you have given us a very just and reasonable reprimand: I shall always value your respect, as that of a learned and worthy person; and you may ever, as far as is consistent with my honour, command me." Master Albert rose, gave the ladies thanks, took his leave very merrily, and departed. Thus the fair dame, never considering whom she jested with, met with her match; of which, if you are wise, you will hereafter be careful.

The sun was now descending in the west, and the heat of the day much abated, when the novels were all ended; upon which the queen pleasantly said, "Nothing more remains to

be done during my administration for the present day, but to give you a new queen for to-morrow, who must take her turn, according to the best of her judgment, in ordering everything that may be necessary for the continuance of our mirth. And though the day ought to continue till it is night; yet, unless you take time a little beforehand, you cannot so well provide for what is to come; therefore, that there may be time enough to prepare whatever the queen shall think proper for the next day, I think the following days ought to begin at this hour. In regard then to Him, by whom all things live, and for our own well-doing, I appoint Filomena to be queen the second day." When she had thus spoken, she rose from her seat, and having taken the crown from her own head, she reverently placed it on Filomena's, humbly saluting her first herself, and afterwards the rest of the company did the same, submitting themselves cheerfully to her government.—Filomena saw herself crowned with a gentle blush; and calling to mind what Pampinea had just said, that she might not seem remiss in her duty, she confirmed all the officers whom Pampinea had appointed; then she ordered the morrow's provision, as also the supper, so near approaching (they being to continue where they were), and afterwards spoke in this manner

"My dear friends, although Pampinea, more through her own courtesy than any merit of mine, has made me your queen, yet am I not disposed to follow my own judgment as to our manner of living, but rather to join my opinion with yours; and, therefore, that you may know what I intend to do, and so alter it at your pleasure, I shall declare it in few words. If I have well considered the method that has been taken to-day, it seems agreeable enough, and till we either grow weary, or find it inconvenient, I resolve not to change it. Continuing then as we have begun, we will rise and divert ourselves awhile by walking; when the sun is down we will sup in the open air, and after we have had some songs and other diversions, it will be time to go to bed. To-morrow morning whilst it is cool and pleasant, we will rise and take a walk, where we like best; and return, as we have done to-day, about dinner-time, and dance; then, after reposing as before, we will come here again to continue our novels, which to me seem equally entertaining and useful. There are some things, indeed, which Pampinea could not accomplish by reason of her late promotion, which I propose to perfect, namely, to keep you within the bounds of some

particular subject, to which your novels are all to relate, and which is to be given you beforehand, that you may have time to think of some pretty story to the purpose; which, if you please, shall be this: As from the beginning of the world, people have been all along conducted by fortune through the various chances of life, and will be so to the end of it; you are all of you to relate a case where a person, after going through a variety of troubles, at last meets with success beyond all hope and expectation."

They all approved the order that was given, and determined to obey it; Dioneo only excepted, who, after the rest were silent, said: "Madam, I approve your order as the rest have done, and think it both pleasant and commendable; but one special favour I beg may be granted me, whilst this company continues together; namely, not to let me be constrained by the law you have made, to relate a story according to the given theme, unless I please; but that I may choose something I like better. And that you may not think that I request this, as if I were unfurnished with discourses of this kind, I am content to be the last in every day's exercise." The queen, knowing him to be a merry companion, and well considering that he would not have moved this request, but with a design to make the company laugh, when they were weary of any particular subject, agreed to what he desired with the consent of all.

They now rose and went to a crystal stream, which fell from a little hill into a vale shaded with trees; where, washing both their hands and their feet, much mirth passed among them, till supper drawing near made them return to the palace. When that was over, the queen ordered the musical instruments to be brought, and that Lauretta should begin a dance, Emilia singing to her, and Dioneo playing upon the lute; with which Lauretta immediately complied, and Emilia sang the following song in a very fascinating manner:

SONG.

I.

With my own charms so blest am I,
Each other passion I defy;
For ever as I gaze, I find
That good which still contents the mind;
Nor former flame, nor future love,
The dear enjoyment can remove.

II.

Nor does the good I thus possess
Become by long admiring less;
No—greater far 's the joy I feel,
Than heart can think, or tongue reveal;
How great it is, they only know,
Who long have sweetly languish'd so.

III.

And I (the more I fix my eyes,
And feel the pleasing passion rise)
Each thought direct, and wish confine,
To make the promis'd blessing mine,
And hope ere long a greater joy:
Where is the nymph so blest as I?

All joined in the song, though the words occasioned some speculation; and after this and a few other little sonnets, a good part of the night being now spent, the queen thought proper to put an end to the first day; lights being consequently called for, she ordered every one to their respective chambers, to repose till the next morning.

THE SECOND DAY.

ALREADY had the sun ushered in a new day, the birds upon the blooming branches attesting it with their merry songs, when the ladies and gentlemen arose, and went into the garden. There they spent some time in walking, and weaving chaplets of flowers; and, as they had done before, after taking a repast in the open air, and dancing, they reposed till the clock struck nones;* at which time they took their places, as the queen had appointed, in the same pleasant meadow, around her. She being of a most graceful person, and having on her head a crown of laurel, looked around in a most cheerful manner on the whole assembly, and then motioned to Neiphile, who, without offering any excuse, began as follows:

* That is, the ninth hour from matins, or about three o'clock in the afternoon.

NOVEL I.

Martellino, feigning to be a cripple, pretends to be cured by being laid upon the body of Saint Arrigo; but his roguery being discovered, he gets soundly beaten, and is afterwards apprehended, and in danger of being hanged, but escapes at last.

It often happens, that he who endeavours to ridicule other people, especially in things of a serious nature, becomes himself a jest, and frequently to his great cost. Of this you will have proof in what I am now going to relate, in obedience to the queen's command. It is an affair which had a very unlucky beginning, and which, beyond all expectation, ended happily enough to one of our city.

There lived, not long since, at Triers, a German, called Arrigo, who was a poor man, and served as a porter, when any one pleased to employ him; yet was he reputed a person of a good life; on which account (whether it be true or false I know not) it was affirmed by the people of Triers, that, at the very instant of his death, the bells of the great church rang of their own accord, which was accounted a miracle, and all declared that this Arrigo was a saint. They flocked to the house where the corpse lay, and carried it as a sanctified body to the great church; bringing thither the halt, lame, and blind, in expectation that, by the touch of it, they would all recover. In so great a concourse of people, it happened, that three of our own city arrived there, one of whom was named Stecchi, another Martellino, and the third Marchese; persons that frequented the courts of princes, to divert them as buffoons and mimicks. Having none of them ever been there before, and seeing the great crowd of people running from all parts of the city, they were much surprised; and hearing the cause, they were very desirous of seeing the corpse. They left their baggage therefore at the inn, and Marchese said, "We will see this saint; but I do not know how we shall contrive to get near enough, for the street is full of soldiers and persons in arms, whom the governor has stationed there, to prevent any tumult in the city; and besides, the church is so thronged with people, that it will be impossible to get in." Martellino, who was eager to be a spectator, replied, "I will find a way, notwithstanding, to get close to the very body."—"How," said Marchese, "is that possible?"—"I'll tell you," answered Martellino: "I intend to counterfeit a cripple, whilst thou shall support me on one side,

and Stecchi on the other, as if I were unable to walk by myself, bringing me towards the saint to be cured; and you will see everybody make way for us to go on.

The other two were much pleased with the contrivance, and they all went accordingly into a private place, where Martellino distorted his hands, fingers, arms, legs, mouth, eyes, and his whole countenance, in such a manner, that it was frightful to behold; and nobody that saw him would have imagined but that he was really so lamed and deformed. Being carried in that guise by Marchese and Stecchi, they directed their way to the church, crying out in a most piteous manner all the way, to make way for God's sake! which the people did with great readiness. In a little time they attracted the eyes of every one, and the general cry was Room! room! till at length they came where the body of St. Arrigo lay. Martellino was then taken from his friends by some persons that stood around, and laid all along upon the body, to the end that he might, by that means, receive the benefit of a cure. All the people's eyes were now upon him, expecting the event; when he, who was master of his business, first began to stretch his fingers, then his hands, afterwards his arms, and at last his whole body; which, when the people saw, they set up such shouts in praise of St. Arrigo, that a clap of thunder would hardly have been noticed in the din.

Now it happened that a Florentine was not far off, who, knowing Martellino very well (not while his body was distorted, but after his pretended cure), burst out laughing, and cried "Good God! who would not have taken him to have been really a cripple?" Some of the bystanders hearing this, immediately said, "And was he not so?"—"No," answered the other, "as God is my judge, he was always as straight as any person here; but he has the art, as you have now seen, of turning his body into what shape he pleases."

There needed nothing more to set them all on fire; they therefore pressed on most violently, crying out to "seize the villain, that blasphemer of God and his saints, who being in no wise disordered, comes here to make a jest of our saint and us." Whereupon they dragged him by the hair of the head, and threw him upon the ground, kicking him, and tearing the clothes off his back; nor was there one that did not endeavour to give him a blow; whilst Martellino kept crying out for God's sake to have mercy; but all to no purpose, for the blows fell thicker and faster upon him.

Marchese and Stecchi now began to be in some pain for

themselves, and not daring to help him, they cried out with the multitude, "Kill him! kill him!" contriving all the time how to get him out of their hands: nevertheless he had certainly been murdered, but for the following expedient. Marchese, knowing that the officers of justice were at the door, ran to the lieutenant that commanded, crying out, "Help, sir, help! for God's sake; here's a fellow that has picked my pocket of a hundred florins; I beg you will assist me in getting them back again." And immediately twelve of the serjeants ran to where Martellino was in the utmost jeopardy, and with the greatest difficulty got him away, all trodden under foot and bruised as he was, and carried him to the palace, followed by many of the people who had been incensed against him, and who now hearing that he was taken up for a cut-purse, and seeing no other way of revenging themselves, declared that they had also been robbed by him.

On hearing these complaints, the judge, who was an ill-tempered man, took him aside and examined him; whilst Martellino answered him in a jesting manner, making no account of their accusations. This so incensed the judge, that he ordered him to be tied by the neck, and soundly lashed, that he might make him confess the crimes he was charged with, in order to hang him afterwards. Martellino being therefore bound down to the ground, and the judge asking him if those things with which he was accused were true, and telling him it would be in vain to deny them; he made answer, "My lord, I am ready to confess the truth; but please first to order all my accusers to say when and where I robbed them, and I will then tell you truly what I am guilty of, and what not." The judge readily consented, and having summoned some of them before him, one said he had picked his pocket eight days ago, another four days, and some averred that he had robbed them that same day. Martellino replied, "My lord, they are all liars; for I had not been here many hours (and would to God I had never come at all!) before I went to view this saint, where I got abused as you now see. That this is true, the officer who keeps your book of presentations, as also my landlord, will testify for me; therefore I beseech you not to torture and put me to death at the instance of these people."

When Marchese and Stecchi heard what passed before the judge, and that their friend was severely handled, they began to be in great fear about him, saying to themselves, that they had taken him out of the frying-pan, to throw him into the

fire: and they ran from place to place, to find out their landlord, whom they acquainted with what had happened. The landlord, laughing heartily at their story, took them to one Alexander Agolanti, a person of great interest in the city, to whom they related the whole affair, entreating him to have pity on poor Martellino. Alexander, after much laughter, went to the governor of the town, and prevailed upon him to have Martellino brought into his presence. The messenger that went for him, found him standing before the judge in his shirt, all terrified, because his worship would hear nothing in his favour, having an aversion perhaps to our country people, and being probably resolved to hang him at all events; and he refused to deliver him up, till he was compelled. Martellino being brought before the governor, told him everything that had happened, and entreated him as a special favour, that he would let him go, saying, that till he came to Florence, he should always think he had the rope about his neck. The governor was highly diverted with the story, and ordering every one of the three a suit of apparel, they escaped, beyond all their hopes, from the most imminent danger, and got home safe and sound.

NOVEL II.

Rinaldo d'Asti having been robbed, comes to Castle Guiglielmo, where he is entertained by a widow lady, makes good his loss, and returns safe home.

The ladies all laughed immoderately at Martellino's adventure, as did the gentlemen likewise, but more especially Filostrato, who, as he sat next to Neiphile, was ordered by the queen to begin his novel, and he immediately complied as follows:—I am going to relate a story, consisting partly of misfortunes, and partly of love, which may be of use to such as walk in love's uncertain paths; in which it happens to those who have not said the Pater Noster of St. Julian, that they often get a bad night's rest, though they lie in a good bed.

In the time of Azzo, marquis of Ferrara, a certain merchant, named Rinaldo d'Asti, came to Bologna to transact some affairs of his own, which being despatched, and being on his return home, it chanced, as he was riding from Ferrara towards Verona, that he fell in with some persons, who

seemed to be merchants, also, but were in reality highwaymen, and he unguardedly joined them. They, finding him to be a merchant, and supposing, therefore, that he must have money about him, resolved to rob him as soon as an opportunity offered; and, that he should have no suspicion, they rode on discoursing with him like persons of reputation and character, showing themselves extremely complaisant and courteous, insomuch, that he thought himself happy in meeting with such good company, as he had with him only one servant.

Talking of various things, they began at last to speak of prayers, and one of the rogues, there being three in number, turned towards Rinaldo, and said, "and pray, sir, what sort of prayer do you use when you are upon a journey?" "In good truth," answered Rinaldo, "I know little of those matters, and am master of very few prayers; but I live in an old-fashioned way, and can tell that twelve pence make a shilling; nevertheless, I always use, when I am upon a journey, before I go out of my inn, to say one Pater Noster and one Ave Maria for the souls of the father and mother of St. Julian, and after that I pray to God and St. Julian to send me a good lodging at night. And let me tell you, sir, very often have I met with great dangers upon the road, from all which I still escaped; and when night drew on I always came to a good lodging, which favour I firmly believe St. Julian, to whose honour I speak it, hath obtained of God for me: nor do I think I should ever travel securely, or succeed in my lodging at night, were I to forget this prayer."—"Then," said the other, "of course you offered up that prayer this morning?"—"Most certainly I did," answered Rinaldo. Said the rogue to himself, having determined now to handle him, "Thou wilt have need enough of it; for, if I mistake not, thy lodging is like to be none of the best:" and afterwards he added, "I have travelled much myself, yet did I never say that prayer, though I have heard it often commended, and I have always fared well; and now this night shall you see which of us will get the better lodging. I must own, however, that instead of it I have used the *Dirupisti*, or the *Intemerata*, or the *De profundis*, which, as my grandmother was wont to tell me, are of singular virtue."

Thus they travelled along, discoursing upon many subjects, and the rogues waiting for a fit time and place to put their wicked purpose in execution. At length the hour growing late, they arrived at a lonely place, closely screened from

view, just at the ford of a river near Castle Guiglielmo. There they made their assault, robbed and stripped Rinaldo to the shirt; and leaving him there on foot, they said to him, "Go, see if thy St. Julian will provide as good a lodging for thee to-night, as we shall have:" so, passing the river, away they went. The servant, like a rascal as he was, seeing his master attacked, rode away without offering the least assistance, and never stopped till he came to Castle Guiglielmo, where, it being late when he got in, he took up his lodging without giving himself any further trouble. Rinaldo remained in his shirt, without shoes or stockings; the weather was extremely cold, and it snowed incessantly. Not knowing what to do, the dark night coming on apace, and he all over in a tremble, with his teeth chattering for cold, he now began to look round for some shelter under which he might continue that night, for fear of being frozen to death; but he saw none (the whole country being laid waste by the late war), and being forced away by the cold, he trudged on towards Castle Guiglielmo, not knowing whether his servant was gone thither or elsewhere; but supposing, if he got admittance, that he should meet with relief. But before he came within a mile of the town, it grew quite dark; and it was so late when he got thither, that the gates were already locked, and the bridge drawn up, and he could obtain no entrance. Grieving much at this, and now quite disheartened, he looked wofully about to see if he could find a cover from the snow; when by chance he spied a house projecting a little way over the walls of the castle, under which he proposed to stand till daylight. There he found a door in the wall, but fast locked, and gathering some straw together which was lying about, he sat down thereon, all pensive and sad, and making loud complaints to St. Julian, telling him, that this was not according to the confidence he had always reposed in him.

But St. Julian, who had a regard for him, soon provided a better lodging. There was a widow lady in that castle, of great beauty, whom the Marquis Azzo loved as his life, and kept in that house under which Rinaldo had taken shelter. That very day the marquis was come to stay all night with her, she having secretly provided a bath for him, and a most elegant supper. Everything being now ready, and only the marquis's company wanting, an express arrived with dispatches, which required him to take horse instantly: he therefore sent to the lady to excuse him, and posted away.

She was much concerned at this, and not knowing how to pass her time, she resolved to go herself into the bath which she had provided for the marquis, and then to sup and go to bed. Now it happened that the bath was near the door where poor Rinaldo was sitting; so that she could hear him moaning and chattering his teeth at such a rate that one would have thought he had a stork's beak instead of jaws. Whereupon she called her maid, and ordered her to look over the wall and see who was that at the door, and what did he want. The servant went, and by the clearness of the sky could just discern Rinaldo sitting in the manner before described. To her question, Who was he, he made answer as well as he could, trembling all the while so much that she could scarcely understand him, telling her how he came thither, and entreating her not to let him perish with cold. The girl was moved to compassion, and hastened to relate the whole story to her mistress, who had pity on him likewise; and recollecting that she had the key of the door, which served for the private admission of the marquis, she said, "Go and open the door gently: we have victuals enough, and nobody to sit down, and we may also spare him a lodging." The maid commended her great charity, and having opened the door and found Rinaldo almost frozen to death, she said, "Make haste, good man, and get into this bath, which is yet warm." He immediately complied without waiting for any farther invitation, and found himself so much refreshed by the warmth, that he seemed restored from death to life. Then the lady sent him some clothes, which had been her husband's, and which fitted him as well, in all respects, as if they had been made for him. Expecting her further commands, he began to thank God and St. Julian, who had delivered him from the prospect of a most terrible night, and brought him at last where he was likely to meet with good entertainment.

The lady, having now reposed a little, ordered a great fire to be made in the hall, and coming thither, she inquired concerning the honest man, what sort of a person he was? The maid replied, "Madam, now he is clothed, he is a handsome man, and appears to be very well bred."—"Go then," said the lady, "and bid him come to the fire, and he may also sup with me, as I know he has had no supper." When Rinaldo came into the hall, and saw the lady, who appeared to him to be a woman of consequence, he made her a very low bow and thanked her in the warmest and most respect

ful terms he could find for the favours he had received at her hand. The lady, finding him to answer to the report made of him by her maid, received him graciously, made him sit down familiarly by the fireside with her, and inquired concerning the misfortunes which had brought him thither. Of these he gave her a faithful account, to which she readily gave credit, having previously heard something of the servant's adventure. She then told him what she knew of the matter, and how the fellow was to be met with in the morning.

Supper being now served up, they washed their hands, and sat down together. He was tall in person, agreeable enough both in countenance and behaviour, and in the prime of life. The lady's eyes took frequent note of all this; and it by no means tended to allay certain emotions which the marquis's visit had bootlessly excited. As soon, therefore, as supper was ended, she advised with her maid whether she might not fairly (since the marquis had put such a slight upon her) make use of the opportunity which fortune had thrown in her way. The girl, who knew how to please her mistress, readily concurred. The lady now returned to the fire, where she had left Rinaldo by himself, and, looking pleasantly at him, she said, "Why so thoughtful, Rinaldo? does the loss of your horse and a few clothes affect you so much? comfort yourself, you are in your own house; and I can tell you farther, that, seeing you in my late husband's clothes, I could not help thinking, several times to-night, that he himself was present. I was more than once on the point of embracing and kissing you, and but for my fear of offending you, I should certainly have done so." Rinaldo was too great a connoisseur in love-matters not to take her meaning. The affair, therefore, was soon settled, and to bed they went, and were as happy as the night was long

In the morning, to prevent the least suspicion, she gave him some old clothes, filled his pocket with money, begging of him to keep the matter secret; and having directed him where to find his servant, she let him out of the door he had come in at. As soon, therefore, as it was broad day, he entered into the castle as if he had come from a great way off, found his servant, and soon clothed himself out of his portmanteau. Just as he was going to mount his man's horse, it happened by great fortune that the three rogues, who had robbed him the day before, were brought into the castle, having been taken up on some other account. In

consequence of their own confession, he got back his horse, clothes, and money, and lost nothing but a pair of garters, of which the robbers could give no account. Rinaldo now thanked God and St. Julian, and, mounting his horse, arrived safe at his own house; and the very next day the three villains were exhibited in public, dancing on nothing.

[St. Julian was eminent for providing his votaries with good lodging: in the English title of his legend he is called the *gode Herbejour;* and Chaucer, in his 'Canterbury Tales,' bestows on the Frankelein, on account of his luxurious hospitality, the title of St. Julian. It is this novel of Boccaccio that has given rise to 'L'oraison de St. Julien' of Lafontaine, and 'Le Talisman,' a comedy, by La Motte. There is also some resemblance between it and part of the old English comedy 'The Widow,' which was produced by the united labours of Ben Jonson, Fletcher, and Middleton. (See 'Dodsley's Collection,' vol. xii.)]

NOVEL III.

Three young gentlemen squander their fortunes, and a nephew of theirs returning home in as desperate a condition, falls in company with an Abbot, whom he afterwards finds to be the King of England's daughter. She marries him, and makes good his uncles' losses, reinstating them in their former prosperity.

THE ladies listened with great admiration to the adventures of Rinaldo d'Asti, and commended his devotion, giving thanks to God and St. Julian who had succoured him in his great necessity. Nor did they blame the lady (though they did not care to speak out) for having had the wit to take the good that heaven had sent her. Whilst the rest were pleasantly engaged in talking over the agreeable night which Rinaldo must have had, Pampinea, finding that she was to speak next, after considering a little what she was to say, and receiving the queen's command, began at last in this manner:

The more we talk of the freaks of fortune, the more, to such as consider them attentively, there remains to be said on the subject. At this none need wonder, who consider that all things, which we foolishly call our own, are in her power; and that she blindly wills them from one to another incessantly, and without any rule or method that can be discovered by us. Though this is a truth evinced every day and in everything, and though it has been already illustrated in some of the previous tales, nevertheless, as the queen is

pleased that this should be our present subject, I shall add a story to what has been said already, which I think you will not dislike.

There dwelt, formerly, in our city, a knight named Tebaldo, who, as some report, was of the family of the Lamberti; though others say he belonged to the Agolanti: but, be that as it may, he was the most wealthy knight of his times, and had three sons; the eldest was called Lamberto, the second Tebaldo, and the third Agolante; all handsome young gallants; though the eldest was not above eighteen when their father died, leaving them in possession of his vast wealth. Finding themselves so rich, and having nobody to control them, they began to spend apace, by keeping vast numbers of servants, and fine horses, and dogs, and hawks, with open house for all comers, making continual tilts and tournaments, and sparing no diversions that belong to gentlemen; indulging themselves besides in every youthful lust and passion. They had not led this life long, before their riches began to waste, and their rents not being sufficient to defray their current expenses, they mortgaged and sold first one estate, and then another; so that they saw themselves coming to nothing, and then poverty opened their eyes, which had hitherto been kept shut. One day, therefore, Lamberto called his two brothers together, and set forth to them the great repute in which their father had lived, the wealth he had left them, and how much they were now impoverished, through their inordinate expenses; advising them, in the best manner he was able, that, before matters grew worse, they should sell the little that was left, and retire from that quarter.

His advice was followed, and, without taking any leave, or making the least stir, they left Florence, and set sail directly for England. Coming to London, they took a little house, and lived as frugally as possible, letting out money at interest. And fortune was so kind to them, that in a few years they got a great deal of money: by which means, it happened, that first one, and then another, returned to Florence, where they recovered back a great part of their estates, purchased others, and got married; and keeping on their banking trade still in England, they sent a nephew thither, whose name was Alessandro, to manage their business. The three brothers, therefore continued at Florence; and forgetting to what misery they had been reduced by their former extravagance, and notwithstanding they all had families, they began to spend immoderately, having large credit from the merchants. Their

expenses were also supported for some years by returns from Alessandro, who had let out money to the barons upon their castles and other estates, which turned to good account. Whilst the three brothers continued spending in this manner, and borrowing whenever they stood in need, placing their whole dependence upon returns from England, a war broke out there, contrary to every one's expectation, between the king and his son; which divided the whole kingdom, some taking part with one, and some with the other. The consequence was that all the barons' castles were taken out of Alessandro's hands, and nothing now was left him that turned to any profit: but living in hopes of peace every day, and then that he should have both principal and interest, Alessandro still continued in the kingdom, whilst the three brethren at Florence abated nothing of their extravagance, but continued borrowing more daily. But, when year after year passed away without any money coming, as was expected, they lost all their credit, and people being desirous of getting what was their due, their effects were seized, which not being found sufficient, they were thrown into prison for the remainder, and their wives and children dispersed up and down the country, in a most distressed condition, with no prospect but of misery for the rest of their lives.

Alessandro, after waiting some years, and finding no likelihood of peace in England, but that he continued there to no purpose, and in danger of his life, resolved to return to Italy. He set out all alone; and as he was going out of Bruges, he overtook a young abbot, clothed in white, and attended by a great train of monks, servants, and baggage. Two aged knights, related to the king, followed the cavalcade. These Alessandro joined; and being known to them, was well received. Travelling in their company, he modestly inquired who those monks were that rode before, with such a retinue, and whither they were going? "He that rides first," replied one of the knights, "is a young gentleman, a relation of ours, who has lately been made abbot of one of the richest abbeys in England; and, because he is younger than is required by the law for such a dignity, we are going to Rome to entreat our holy father to dispense with his want of years: but this is to be a secret." The new abbot riding sometimes before his company, and sometimes behind (as is usual with persons on the road), got sight at last of Alessandro, who was a graceful, well-behaved young gentleman, and was so taken with him at the very first view, that he never

saw any one he liked better: and having called him to his side, he inquired who he was, whence he came, and whither he was going? Alessandro answered him very ingenuously, and, at the same time, made him an offer of his little service. The abbot was much pleased with his modest and graceful manner of speaking and behaviour, and especially at finding, though his business was mean, that he was a gentleman. And being full of compassion for his losses, he began to comfort him in a friendly manner, bidding him to be of good courage, for if he were a worthy man, God might exalt him to a higher pitch than that from which fortune had cast him down. He desired him, too, as he was going towards Tuscany, to make one in his company, for he himself was likewise travelling thither. Alessandro returned thanks for the encouragement given him, and professed himself entirely at his lordship's service.

The abbot riding on (having got some new fancies in his head since the sight of Alessandro) chanced, after some days' travelling, to come to a country village, which afforded but bad accommodations; and, because the abbot had a mind to halt there, Alessandro made him alight at the house of a person with whom he was acquainted, and provided him a bed in the least incommodious part of the house. Being now become steward of the household, as it were, to the abbot, he disposed of the company in different parts of the town, in the most convenient manner he was able. After the abbot had supped, it being now midnight, and every one gone to rest, Alessandro inquired of the landlord where he was to lie? "In good truth, sir," replied the man, "you see my house is quite full, so that I and my family must be forced to sleep on benches; yet there are some granaries in the abbot's chamber: I can carry a pallet-bed for you thither, and you may rest as well as you can."—"But, landlord," quoth Alessandro, "how can I be in the abbot's chamber, it being so small that there is no room for any of his monks? If I had thought of it before the curtains were drawn, the monks should have lain in the granaries, and I would have gone where the monks are." "The case is this," said the host, "you may lie there, if you please, as well as anywhere in the world: the abbot is asleep, and his curtains drawn; I can convey a little bed thither softly, and you may rest very comfortably." Alessandro, finding that it might be done without disturbing the abbot, consented, and accommodated himself there with as little noise as possible.

THE IMPROVISED MARRIAGE

SECOND DAY ❧ ❧ ❧ NOVEL III

The abbot, whom his new desires kept awake, heard what passed between Alessandro and his landlord; and finding that Alessandro was there, he began to reason with himself in this manner: "I have now a fit opportunity to compass my desires; if I let this pass, the like may never offer again." Resolving, therefore, to make use of it, and supposing that all was quiet in the house, he called, with a low voice, "Alessandro!" and bade him come and lie down by him; and Alessandro, after many excuses, undressed, and did as he was desired. The abbot then laid his hand upon the other's breast, as a lover would do; which Alessandro was much surprised at, and began to fear that he had some bad design. As soon as the abbot perceived this, he could not help smiling; and having laid his bosom bare, he took Alessandro's hand and put it upon it, saying, "Be not afraid: convince yourself of what I am." Alessandro laid his hand there, and found two breasts smooth and delicate like polished ivory, which convinced him that it was a woman: and he was going to have been more familiar; when she interrupted him, saying, "Before you come nearer to me, observe what I am going to say: I am a woman, and not a man, as you see, and was now travelling to the pope, for him to dispose of me in marriage: but whether it be your good fortune, or my unhappiness, since I first saw you, the other day, I could not forbear loving you as much as woman ever loved a man; I am therefore determined to marry you in preference to any other person; but if you will not accept of me, go hence at once, and return to the place you came from." Though she was unknown to Alessandro, yet, when he considered the company that was with her, he judged that she must be a lady of distinction, and her person he saw was beautiful; therefore, without much consideration, he declared, that if she was willing, he should be highly pleased. She then rose up in bed, and turning towards a crucifix that stood upon the table, gave a ring into his hand, and made him espouse her; and there, locked in each other's arms, they passed the hours that remained till dawn, in great mutual delight. In the morning, after concerting measures for the continuance of their secret meetings, Alessandro rose and stole out of the room, without any one knowing where he had passed the night.

They proceeded on their route, Alessandro enchanted with the abbot and his company, and after several days' journey they arrived in Rome. Soon afterwards the abbot, with the

two knights and Alessandro, was introduced to his holiness, and, after the customary reverences, thus addressed him:

"Holy father, you know better than anybody that they who desire to live honestly and well should avoid, as much as in them lies, all occasions which may lead them to act otherwise. For which reason have I fled, in the garb you behold, with a great part of the treasure of my father, who is King of England, and was about to marry me, young as I am, to the King of Scotland, who is very old, and I am come hither to beg that your holiness would dispose of me in marriage. Nor was it the age of the King of Scotland that made me fly, so much as the fear of doing, through the frailty of my youth, were I married to him, what should be contrary both to the laws of God and to the honour of our royal house. As I was coming with this intention, Providence set before my eyes him whom, in its mercy, it destined I should accept as my husband. It was this young gentleman (here she pointed to Alessandro), whose merit and behaviour make him worthy of the greatest princess, although his family be less noble. Him have I chosen, nor will I think of any other, however it may seem to my father or any one else. The principal inducement then to this journey is removed: but I chose to proceed, that I might visit the holy places with which this city abounds, and also your holiness, to the end that the contract of marriage, made only in the presence of God, may be declared in yours, and so made public to the world: wherefore I humbly entreat your blessing, to make us more capable of pleasing Him, whose vicar you are, that we may live together to the honour of God and of you, and at length die so."

Great was Alessandro's surprise and joy when he heard that his wife was the King of England's daughter; but the knights were enraged beyond measure, and, had it not been in the pope's presence, they had certainly offered violence to Alessandro, and perhaps to the princess likewise. On the other hand, the pope was in amaze, both at her dress and the choice she had made; but, seeing that what was done could not be undone, he was willing to satisfy her request. Having consoled the two angry and astounded knights, and made peace between them and the lady and Alessandro, he gave orders for what he would have done; and when the appointed day was come, he made the lady appear most royally dressed before all the cardinals, and other great personages, who had been invited to a most magnificent feast, where she

appeared so beautiful and courteous, that every one was charmed with her. In like manner was Alessandro richly apparelled; in his aspect and behaviour being more like a prince than a person brought up to trade, and he was much honoured by the two knights. The pope saw the marriage celebrated with all imaginable grandeur; and, after receiving his benediction, the bride and bridegroom took their leave.

Alessandro and his lady were desirous, when they left Rome, of seeing Florence, whither fame had already carried the news of their marriage; and they were received there with the utmost respect. She immediately took the three brothers out of prison, paying all their debts, and settled them and their wives in their former estates. This gained them the goodwill of every one; and departing thence, they took Agolante with them, and came to Paris, where the king received them in a most honourable manner. Thence the two knights went to England, where they prevailed so far with the king that he forgave his daughter, and received them with all possible demonstration of joy, making his son-in-law a knight, and creating him Earl of Cornwall. Alessandro's behaviour and conduct were such, that he accommodated matters between father and son, which was of great service to the kingdom, and gained him the love and esteem of every one. Agolante recovered all that was due to him, and returned to Florence immensely rich, being first knighted by Count Alessandro, who lived happily with his princess; and it is reported that, through his prudence and valour, and the assistance of his father-in-law, he made a conquest of Scotland, and was crowned king of that realm.

NOVEL IV.

Landolfo Ruffolo, falling into poverty, became a pirate, was taken by the Genoese, and suffered shipwreck, but saved himself upon a cask of jewels, was taken out of the sea by a woman at Corfu, and afterwards returned home very rich.

When Pampinea had finished her tale, Lauretta, who sat next her, at once began thus:—Most kind ladies, there is no greater freak of fortune, in my opinion, than to see one of low condition arrive at princely dignity, as Pampinea has just showed us in the case of Alessandro. Now since it is ruled that each of us is to narrate something having direct reference to the prescribed theme, I shall not scruple to

relate a story comprising greater hardships than the former, but not having, indeed, so glorious an end. I am sensible that, in this respect, I shall be listened to with the less interest; but, as I am able to give you no better, I hope you will excuse me.

It is generally admitted, that the sea coast from Reggio to Gaeta is the pleasantest part of Italy; that part of it near Salerno, which the inhabitants call the Coast of Malfi, is full of little towns, gardens, rivulets, and abounds with rich people expert at merchandise. Amongst the rest there is a town called Ravello, in which were many wealthy persons, and one especially, called Landolfo Ruffolo, who, not content with his great store, but willing to make it double, was near losing all he had, and his life also. This man, having settled his affairs, as other merchants are used to do, bought a large ship, and freighting it all on his own account, set sail for the island of Cyprus. He there found many ships laden with the very same commodities as his own, consequently it was necessary for him not only to make a quick market of his goods, but also, if he meant to dispose of them at all, to sell them for a trifle, to his great loss and almost ruin. Grieving much thereat, and hardly knowing what to do, seeing that from great wealth he was reduced almost to poverty, he resolved either to die, or to repair his losses by plunder, rather than go back a poor man to the home from which he had come away so wealthy. Meeting with a purchaser for his great ship, with the money made of that and his merchandise he bought a light little vessel fit for a pirate, and armed and furnished it with everything suitable, intending to make other people's goods his own, and especially those of the Turks. Fortune was abundantly more favourable to him in this way of life than she had been in trade; for, in the space of a year, he took so many Turkish prizes, that he found he had not only got his own again, but made it more than double.

Being now comforted for his former loss, and thinking he had enough, he resolved, for fear of a second disaster, to make the best of his way home with what he had acquired; and, as he was still fearful of trade, he had no mind to employ any more of his money that way, but set sail in the little vessel in which he had gained it. He was now in the Archipelago, when at nightfall a sirocco, or great south-east wind, arose, directly contrary to their intended course, which made such a sea that the ship could not bear up against it,

and they were glad to get into a bay under the cover of a little island, to wait for better weather.

Landolfo had just entered the harbour when two Genoese caracks came in from Constantinople to avoid the same storm; and, as soon as the men in them saw the small bark, they blocked her in, and on ascertaining that she belonged to an owner whom they knew to be very rich; as men addicted to plunder and rapine, they resolved to make her their prize. Landing some of their men, therefore, well armed with cross-bows and other weapons, they posted them so as to prevent any of the crew issuing out of the bark, unless at the cost of their lives; whilst the rest getting into the long-boat, and the sea being favourable, soon boarded Landolfo's vessel, and took all his people, and everything in it, without the loss of a man, leaving him nothing but a waistcoat; and after they had cleared out the vessel, they sank her. The day following, the wind having shifted, they made all sail for the west, and had a good voyage all that day; but night coming on, the wind became boisterous again, and the storm was such that the two caracks were parted, whilst that wherein poor Landolfo was, drove with the utmost violence upon the coast of Cephalonia, and was smashed like a glass flung against a wall. The sea being covered in a moment with all sorts of merchandise, and with chests, tables, and fragments of the wreck, all those of the crew who could swim strove, in spite of the darkness and the fury of the waves, to lay hold of such things as chanced to float near them. Amongst these was the unfortunate Landolfo, who, though he had wished for death a thousand times the day before, rather than return home a beggar, was terrified now that he saw death at hand, and got hold of a plank, like the rest, in hopes that if his fate were delayed, God would send him some means for his escape. Bestriding the plank as well as he could, and driven to and fro by the wind, he supported himself till daylight; and then looking around him he could see nothing but clouds and water, and a chest driving towards him, to his great alarm, for sometimes it came so near that he was afraid it would dash against him, and then he would endeavour, with the little strength he had left, to put it by with his hand; at length a great blast of wind sent it with such violence against the plank on which he floated, as to overset it, and plunge him over head and ears into the water. He rose again, however, and swimming with the strength of fear rather than with his own, he found himself at such a distance from the plank that

he was afraid he could not recover it. Getting therefore to the chest, which was nearer, he laid his breast upon it as well as he could, and used his arms for paddles. In this manner was he carried up and down, with nothing to eat, but drinking more than he desired, neither knowing where he was, nor seeing anything but water for a day and a night.

The next morning (whether it was through God or the force of the winds) Landolfo, who was well nigh become a sponge, grappling the chest with both arms, with the usual tenacity of drowning men, drew near to the island of Corfu, at a spot where, by good fortune, a poor woman was scouring her dishes with salt water and sand. When she saw him approach, and could discover in him nothing in the shape of man, she screamed, and started back in terror. He was too exhausted to be able to speak, and scarcely could he see much; but as the waves carried him towards the shore, the woman could distinguish the shape of the chest. Looking more narrowly, she saw an arm laid over it, and then a face, and knew at once what was the matter. Moved by compassion, she stepped a little way into the sea, which was now calm, and seizing the half drowned wretch by the hair of his head, drew both him and the chest to land, where, with much trouble, she unfolded his arms from the chest, which she set upon the head of her daughter, who was with her. She herself carried Landolfo like a little child to the town, put him on a stove, and chafed and washed him with warm water, by which means the vital warmth began to return, and his strength partially revived. In due time she took him from the stove, comforted him with wine and good cordials, and kept him some days till he knew where he was; she then restored him his chest, and told him he might now provide for his departure.

He had forgotten all about the chest, but took it from the hands of the woman, supposing that, small as its worth might be, it might serve for his support for a short time. Finding it very light, he was somewhat disheartened; however, whilst the good woman was out of the way, he broke it open, and found a great quantity of precious stones, some of which were polished and set. Having some judgment in such matters, and seeing that these gems were of immense value, he was now thoroughly comforted, and praised God for not having yet forsaken him. However, as he had been twice buffeted by fortune already, and was fearful of a third mishap, he judged that great caution was requisite to bring these

things safe home; he wrapped them up, therefore, in old rags, as well as he could, and told the woman that he had no further use for the chest, but that she might keep it if she would give him a sack in its stead, which she was very glad to do. And now, returning her a thousand thanks, he departed with his sack over his shoulder, and passed over in a bark to Brundisi, and thence to Trani, where he met with merchants of his own town, who clothed him out of charity, after he had told them all that had befallen him, only omitting all mention of the cask of jewels. They also lent him a horse, and sent company with him to Ravello, whither he said he wished to return. Arriving there in safety, he gave thanks to God; and now he inquired more narrowly into his sack than he had done before, and found so many valuable jewels, that, rating them at the lowest prices, he was twice as rich as when he left home. Finding means, therefore, to dispose of them, he sent a sum of money to the woman at Corfu, who had taken him out of the sea, and treated him so kindly; and also to the merchants at Trani for clothing him; the remainder he kept, without having any more mind to trade, and lived handsomely upon it the rest of his life

NOVEL V.

Andreuccio, of Perugia, coming to Naples to buy horses, meets with three perilous adventures in one night; from all which he escapes, and returns with a ruby of value.

THE jewels found by Landolfo put me in mind, said Fiammetta, whose turn it was now to speak, of a story as full of perils as the last, but with this difference, that in the one case they happened in the course of some years, whereas in the other they fell out in the space of one night, as you shall hear.

There lived, as I have heard, at Perugia, a young man named Andreuccio di Pietro, a dealer in horses, who, hearing that they were cheap at Naples, put five hundred florins of gold into his purse; and leaving home for the first time in his life, in company with some other dealers, arrived in that city on a Sunday evening. Having consulted with his landlord, he went into the market next morning, where he saw many horses to his mind, and cheapened some as he went up and down, without coming to any bargain; but to

show people that he came with an intent to buy, he unadvisedly pulled out his purse on all occasions. The consequence was, that a very pretty Sicilian damsel (who was at every one's service for a small matter) got sight of the purse, without being observed by its owner: and said she to herself, as she passed on, "Who is there that would be my betters, if that purse were mine?" Along with her was an old woman of Sicily likewise, who, as soon as she saw Andreuccio, ran and embraced him; which the young woman observing, without saying a word, stepped aside to wait for her. Andreuccio recognised the old woman, spoke to her with great cordiality, and having made her promise to come to his inn, he parted from her and went on about his business, but bought nothing all that morning. The young woman, who had taken notice first of the purse, and then of her friend's knowledge of the owner, began to inquire of her, as cautiously as might be, by way of contriving how to come at the money, in whole or in part, who that man was, whence he came, what was his business, and how she happened to know him. These questions the old woman answered in every particular, as fully as he himself could have done, having lived a long time with his father in Sicily, and afterwards at Perugia, and having heard from him the cause of his coming to Naples, and when he was to return. Thinking herself now sufficiently instructed concerning the man's kindred and their names, the young woman laid her plans in the most artful manner possible; and going home, she sent the old woman out upon business for the whole day, that she might have an opportunity of seeing Andreuccio again. In the meantime, towards evening, she despatched a young woman, well trained for such services, to his inn, where the messenger found him sitting alone at the door, and inquiring of him whether one Andreuccio, of Perugia, lived there, he made answer, that he was the man. She then took him a little aside, and said, "Sir, a gentlewoman of this city would gladly speak with you, if you please." On hearing this, he began to consider the matter; and, as she seemed to be a creditable girl, he concluded that the lady must be in love with him, being in his own eyes as handsome a man as any in Naples. He answered, therefore, that he was ready, and asked where and when the lady would speak with him. "She expects you," said the girl, "at her own house, as soon as may be agreeable to you." Without saying a word then to the people of the inn, he bade her show him the way; and she brought him to her house, in a

certain street famous for such sort of inhabitants; but he, knowing nothing of the matter, nor at all suspecting but that he was visiting a place of repute, and a lady that had taken a fancy to him, went into the house, and going up-stairs (whilst the girl called out to her mistress that Andreuccio was there), found her at the top, waiting for him. She was young, had a fine face and figure, and was very well dressed. Running down two or three steps with open arms to meet him, and clasping his neck, she stood some time without speaking a word, as if overpowered by her emotions; at last, showering tears and kisses on his face, she faltered out, "O, my Andreuccio! you are heartily welcome." Quite astonished at being caressed in such a manner, he replied, "Madam, I am proud of the honour to wait upon you." She then took him by the hand, and led him, without saying a word more, through a large dining-room into her own chamber, which was perfumed with roses, orange-flowers, and other rich odours, and where there was also a fine bed, and other rich furniture, far beyond what he had ever seen before, which convinced him that she was some great lady. When they had sat down together upon a couch at the bed's feet, she addressed him thus:

"I am very sure, Andreuccio, you must be under great astonishment both at my tears and embraces, as being unacquainted with me, and perhaps never having heard of me before; but you will now hear what will surprise you more, namely, that I am your sister; and I assure you, that since God has indulged me with the sight of one of my brothers—how I wish I could see them all!—I could die contented this very moment. If you are unacquainted with the particulars of my story, I will relate them. Pietro, my father and yours, as I suppose you must know, lived a long time at Palermo, where he was much respected for his integrity and good-nature, and is so still, by all that knew him. But of all his friends, none loved him so well as my mother, a widow lady, who, notwithstanding the regard due to her father and brothers, as well as to her own honour, cohabited with him, till at length I was born, and am now what you see. Having occasion afterwards to retire from Palermo, and to return to Perugia, he left me there an infant, with my mother, and from that time, as far as I can learn, took no more notice either of me or her; which, were he not my father, I could blame him for; considering what ingratitude he showed to my mother, to say nothing of the love he owed to me, his child, born to

him by no vile prostitute, but by one who, out of her abundant love, had put herself and all her wealth into his hands, without having any farther knowledge of him. Well, well!—ill actions, done so long since, are easier blamed than amended: yet so it was; he left me, as I said, at Palermo, an infant, where, when I grew up, my mother, who was rich, married me to one of the family of the Gergenti, who, out of regard to me and her, came and lived at Palermo, where, being an ardent Guelph, and having begun to treat with our King Charles, he was discovered by Frederick, King of Arragon, before his scheme could take effect, and was forced to fly from Sicily, at a time when I expected to have been the greatest lady ever known in the island. Taking with us what few effects we could (I call them few, in comparison with the abundance we were possessed of), and leaving our estates and palaces behind us, we came at length to this place, where we found King Charles so grateful, that he has made up to us, in part, the losses we had sustained on his account, giving us lands and houses, and paying my husband, and your kinsman, a pension besides, as you will hereafter see. Thus I live here, where, thanks be to Heaven, and not to you, my dearest brother, I now see you." Having so said, she wept, and tenderly embraced him again.

Andreuccio, hearing this fable so orderly, so artfully composed, and related without the least faltering or hesitation; remembering, also, that his father had lived at Palermo, and knowing, by his own experience, how prone young fellows are to love; beholding, too, her tears and affectionate caresses, he took all she had said for gospel: and when she had done speaking, he replied: "Madam, it should not seem strange to you that I am surprised; for, in truth, whether it was that my father, for reasons best known to himself, never mentioned you or your mother at any time; or, if he did, that I have forgotten it, I had no more knowledge of you than if you had never been born. Truly it is the more pleasing to me to find a sister here, as I the less expected it, and am also alone: nor is there any man, however high he may be, who would not value you; much more myself, who am but a mean trader. But one thing I beg you would clear up to me, that is—How came you to know that I was here?"

"A poor woman," she replied, "whom I often employ, told me so; for she lived, as she informed me, with our father a considerable time, both at Palermo and Perugia; and were it not that it appeared more reputable that you should come to

my house, than that I should visit you at another's, I would have come directly to you." She then inquired of him particularly, and by name, how all their relations did; to all which he answered her fully, his belief in her story becoming the stronger in proportion as there was the more reason for suspicion. Their conference having lasted a long time, and the weather being sultry, she ordered some Greek wine and sweetmeats for him; and when he made an offer afterwards to depart, because it was supper-time, she would by no means suffer it; but seeming to be under great concern, she embraced him, and said, "Alas! now I plainly see how little account you make of me; that, being with a sister whom you never saw before, and in her house, which you should always make your home, you should yet think of going to sup at an inn. Indeed you shall sup with me; and though my husband be abroad, which I am much concerned at, I will contrive, as well as a lady may, to pay you some little respect." Not knowing what else to say to this, Andreuccio replied, "I love you as much as it is possible for me to love a sister; but it will be wrong not to go, because they will be expecting me to supper all the evening." "Lord, bless me!" she exclaimed, "have I no one here that I can send to tell them not to expect you? But you would oblige me more, and do as you ought, if you would send to invite your friends hither to supper, and afterwards, if you chose to go, you might all of you go together." Andreuccio would not trouble her) that evening, he said, with his companions, but for himself, she might dispose of him as she pleased. She now made a pretence of sending to his inn, to tell them not to expect him to supper, and, after much other discourse, they sat down to a choice and copious repast, which she contrived to protract till it was quite dark. When they rose from table, Andreuccio again wanted to go away; but she would by no means suffer it, for Naples, she declared, was not a place to walk in after dark, especially for a stranger; and she had sent word to the inn that he would sleep as well as sup abroad. Believing this to be true, and glad also of being with his sister, he was easily prevailed upon to stay. After supper, she purposely prolonged the conversation to a late hour in the night, when she left him in her own chamber to take his repose, with a boy to wait upon him, she herself retiring with her women into another room.

It was very hot weather, on which account Andreuccio, seeing himself alone, stripped to his doublet, and pulling off

his breeches, laid them under his bolster. Having occasion to retire, he asked the boy to show him a conveniency; the boy pointed to a corner of the room where there was a door, and desired him to enter it. In he went, without the least suspicion, and setting his foot upon a board, which was not nailed at the other end to the rafter on which it was laid, it flew up, and down they went, board and man together. Heaven was merciful to him, however, for he was not hurt by the fall, though the height was great, but he was horribly daubed with the filth, of which the place was full. That you may better understand this, and what followed, I shall describe the place to you. In a narrow alley, such as you may often see between two houses, on two beams reaching from one house to the other, some boards and a place to sit upon were laid, and it was one of these boards that fell down with him. Finding himself now at the bottom, he called in great distress to the boy; but the latter, the moment he heard him fall, ran off to tell his mistress, who hastened to the chamber to see if Andreuccio's clothes were there. Finding both them and the money, which he, out of a foolish mistrust, always carried about him, and having now got hold of that for the sake of which she had laid this snare, pretending to be of Palermo, and the sister of this Perugian, she took no farther heed of her dear brother, but made the door fast, out of which he passed, when he fell. Andreuccio, finding the boy made no answer, bawled out louder and louder, but to no purpose; and now, beginning to suspect the trick when it was too late, he climed over a low wall which parted the alley from the street, and went to the door, which he knew full well; there did he knock and shout in vain, for a long time; lamenting much, and seeing plainly his calamity: "Alas!" quoth he, "in how little a time have I lost five hundred florins, and a sister besides!"

After many more wailings, he began again to batter the door, and to bawl so loudly that he roused many of the neighbours out of their beds. Among the rest, one of the courtesan's women, pretending to be half asleep, opened the casement, and called out, "Who's that making such a noise there?"—"Oh!" cried Andreuccio, "don't you know me? I am Andreuccio, brother to my lady Fiordaliso." "Prithee, honest fellow," replied the woman, "if thou hast had too much liquor, get thee to bed, and come to-morrow. I know nothing of Andreuccio, nor what thy idle tale means; please to go about thy business, I say again, and let us rest."—

"What!" said he, "don't you know what I say? you know well enough, if you will; but if our Sicilian relationship be so soon forgotten, give me my clothes which I left with you, and I'll go with all my heart." "The man is dreaming," she replied, with a contemptuous laugh, and instantly shut the casement.

Andreuccio, now too well assured of his misfortune, became outrageous in his sorrow; and, resolving to obtain by force, what he had failed to get by fair words, he took a great stone, and banged at the door harder than ever. Many of the neighbours whom he had waked up, supposing that he was some spiteful fellow, who did this to annoy the woman, and provoked at the intolerable noise he made, called out, one and all (just as dogs in the street all join in barking at a strange cur), "It is a shameful thing to come to a decent woman's house at this time of night, with these idle stories: get away, in God's name, and let us sleep; if thou hast any business with her, come to-morrow, and do not disturb us now." Encouraged, perhaps, by these last words, a bully in the house, whom Andreuccio had neither seen nor heard of, came to the window, and with a most rough and terrible voice, cried out, "Who is that below?" Andreuccio, looking up at this, beheld an ill-looking rascal, with a great black beard, yawning and rubbing his eyes, as if he was just awaked out of his sleep. He made answer, therefore, not without a good deal of fear, "I am brother to the lady within:" but the other (never waiting to let him make an end of his speech) replied, "I don't know what should stop me from coming down and cudgelling thee as long as thou canst stand, for a troublesome drunken beast as thou art, disturbing everybody's rest in this manner;" and with that he closed the window. Hereupon some of the neighbours, who knew more of the fellow's character, called out softly to Andreuccio, "For Heaven's sake, honest man, go away, unless thou hast a mind to lose thy life; it will be much the best for thee."

Terrified by the bully's voice and aspect, and persuaded by these people, who seemed to speak out of mere good will, the woe-begone Andreuccio now gave up all hopes of recovering his money, and wended his way towards that part of the city whence he had been decoyed by the girl the day before. But unable to endure the scent he carried about him, and purposing to have a good wash in the sea, he turned to the left, through a street called Catalana. He had now reached the higher part of the city, when he saw two people

coming towards him with a lantern, and fearing that they were the watch, or some ill-disposed persons, he stepped into an old house that was near, to hide himself. It happened that these people were going into the very same place; and one of them having laid down some iron tools there, which he carried over his shoulder, they began to examine them together. While they were talking about them, said one to the other, "There is the most confounded stink here that ever I smelt in my life, what can it be?" Then, turning the lantern this way and that, they spied unfortunate Andreuccio, and, in a good deal of amazement, demanded who he was? He made no answer; and, drawing nearer with the light, they asked what he did there in such a pickle? He then related to them his whole adventure; and they, easily guessing where the thing had happened, said to one another, "This must certainly have been in the house of Scarabon Firebrand." Then, turning towards him: "Honest man," said one of them, "you ought to be very thankful that you fell down, and could not return into the house, for otherwise you would certainly have been murdered as soon as ever you went to sleep, and so have lost your life as well as your money. But what signifies lamenting? You may as soon pluck a star out of the firmament, as recover one farthing; nay, you may chance to be killed, should the man hear that you make any words about it." Having admonished him in this manner, they said, "See, we have pity on you, and if you will engage with us in a certain affair which we are now about, we are very sure that your share will amount to more than you have lost." Andreuccio, like a desperate man as he was, told them he was willing.

That day had been buried Signor Philippo Minutolo, Archbishop of Naples, in rich pontifical robes, and with a ruby on his finger worth upwards of five hundred florins of gold. His body they proposed to strip and rifle, and they made known their intention to Andreuccio, who, more covetous than wise, went with them towards the cathedral. As they were going along, he smelt so badly, that one said to the other, "Can we contrive no way to wash this man a little, so as to make him stink less infernally?" "Why not!" said the other, "we are not far from a well, where there are usually a pully and a great bucket; let us go there, and we may make him clean in an instant." Coming to the well, they found the rope, but the bucket was taken away; they therefore agreed to tie him to the rope, and let him down; and

when he had well washed himself, he was to shake the rope, and they would draw him up. Now it happened that, after they had let him down, some of the watch, being thirsty with the heat of the weather and a sharp run they had had after some rogue or another, came to that well to drink, and as soon as the two men saw them, they took to their heels: the watch, however, saw nothing of them. Andreuccio had by this time washed himself thoroughly at the bottom of the well; and the watch having laid down their casques and halberds upon the ground, began to draw up the rope, thinking, from its weight, that the bucket was fastened to it, and full of water. As soon as Andreuccio found himself at the top, he let go the rope, and clung fast to the edge of the well; the watch immediately dropped the rope on seeing him, and ran away, frighted out of their wits, which greatly amazed him; and had he not held fast, he would have fallen to the bottom, and perhaps lost his life. Getting out, however, and beholding their weapons, which he knew belonged not to his companions, he wondered the more; and not knowing what to make of it, he went away without touching anything. As he was walking along, not knowing whither, he met with his companions, who had returned to help him out of the well. Greatly surprised to see him, they asked who had helped him out. He replied, that he could not tell, and related to them the whole affair, and what he had found by the well-side: whereupon, laughing heartily, they acquainted him with the reason of their running away, and who they were that had drawn him up.

Without wasting more time in words, it being now midnight, the three confederates hastened to the great church, entered without difficulty, and went straight to the archbishop's tomb, which was of marble, and of great size. With their levers they raised up the cover, which was very heavy, so high that a man might go under and prop it; which being done, said one, "Who shall go in?"—"Not I," cried the other.—"Nor I," said the first, "but Andreuccio shall."—"I will not go in," quoth Andreuccio; when they both turned towards him, and said, "What! you won't go in? We will beat your brains out this moment, if you don't." Terrified at their threats, he consented, and being now within, he began to consider with himself in this manner: "These fellows have certainly forced me in here to cheat me, and so when I have given them everything, and am endeavouring to get out again, they will run away, and I shall be left empty

handed." Accordingly, he resolved to make sure of his part, beforehand; and, remembering the precious ring he had heard them speak of, as soon as ever he got into the vault, he took it off the archbishop's finger, and secured it. Then he gave his companions the pastoral staff, mitre, and gloves, and after stripping the prelate's body to his shirt, he told them there was nothing else. They insisted that there was a ring, and bade him seek everywhere for it. He assured them that he could find nothing of the sort, and, pretending to look carefully about, he kept them some time waiting for him; at length they, who were fully as cunning as himself, calling to him to search diligently, suddenly drew away the prop which supported the cover, and left him shut up in the vault. You may easily suppose what condition he was in now. Many times did he endeavour with his head and shoulders to raise up the heavy slab, but in vain; till, overcome with grief, he fell down upon the dead body; and whoever had seen them then, could scarcely have said, whether there was more life in the one than the other. When at last he came to himself, bitter were his lamentations, seeing that he was now brought to this dreadful dilemma, that he must either die there with hunger, and the stench of the dead carcase, if no one came to help him out, or be hanged for a thief, should any one happen to find him in that place.

While he was in this perplexity, he heard the noise of many persons in the church, who, he supposed, were come to do what he and his companions had been about, and this greatly added to his fear; but after they had raised up the lid and propped it, a dispute arose which should go in; and none caring to do it, after a long contest, said a priest, "What are you afraid of? Do you think he will eat you? Dead men cannot bite; I will go in myself." And immediately resting his belly on the edge of the vault, he attempted to slide down feet foremost; which, Andreuccio perceiving, he stood up and caught fast hold of one of the priest's legs, as if he meant to pull him in. The priest upon this making a most terrible outcry, scrambled out immediately; and the whole party, leaving the vault open in their terror, ran for their lives, as if they had been pursued by a hundred thousand devils. Andreuccio, little expecting this good fortune, got out of the vault, and the church, as quickly as he could.

Day-light had now begun to appear, and wandering, with the ring on his finger, he knew not whither, he came at last to the sea-side, and found the way leading to his inn. There

he met with his companions and his landlord, who had been in pain all that night for him; and having related to them all that had passed, he was advised to get out of Naples with all speed. He instantly complied with that advice, and returned to Perugia, having laid out his money on a ring, whereas the intent of his journey had been to buy horses.

[The first part of this story has been imitated in many tales and romances, particularly in 'Gil Blas,' where a deceit, similar to that practised by the Sicilian damsel, has been adopted. One of the tableaux of the Trouveurs, entitled 'Borvin de Provins' (Barbazan, iii, 357), is the origin of all those numerous tales in which the unwary are cozened by courtesans assuming the character of lost relations.]

NOVEL VI.

Madam Beritola was found on an island with two goats, having lost her two sons. She went thence to Lunigiana, where one of her sons became servant to the lord thereof, and being found with his daughter, was sent to prison. Afterwards, when Sicily rebelled against King Charles, that same son was discovered again by his mother, and was married to his master's daughter; and his brother being found likewise, they both rose again to great estate and credit.

THE ladies and gentlemen were much diverted with the adventures that befell Andreuccio, as related by Fiammetta; when Emilia, perceiving the story to be at an end, began, by the queen's order, in this manner:—Very sad and grievous are the changes of fortune; yet, whenever we talk of them, they serve to arouse and awaken our understandings, which are but too easily enchanted by her flatteries; and I am persuaded, that to hear them recounted, must be acceptable both to the happy and the wretched, as tending to make the former cautious, and affording matter of consolation to the latter. Wherefore, though great things have been already treated of, yet do I purpose to relate a story no less true than lamentable, which, though it ended well, was yet full of such bitter thwartings, that one would scarcely imagine they could ever be sweetened by any subsequent joy.

You are aware, dear ladies, that after the death of the Emperor Frederick II., Manfredi was crowned king of Sicily. At the court of that sovereign, and standing very high in his favour, was a Neapolitan gentleman, Arrighetto Capece by name, who had for his wife, Beritola Caracciola, a most

beautiful and worthy lady of Naples. This gentleman had the government of the island in his hands at the time when King Charles I. gained the battle of Benevento, in which Manfredi was slain, and he had the grief to find that the whole kingdom had revolted to the conqueror. Reposing then but little trust in the scanty faith of the Sicilians, and not being willing to become a subject to the enemy of his former master, Arrighetto prepared secretly to leave the place; which being discovered by the inhabitants, he and many other of Manfredi's friends and servants were delivered up to King Charles, along with the possession of the island.

In this sudden change of affairs, the lady Beritola, not knowing what was become of her husband, and fearful of the worst, left everything behind her, to escape dishonour; and taking only a child of eight years old, called Goffredi, and being with child of another, she embarked, in the utmost distress, in a little vessel, for Lipari. There she brought forth another son, whom she called Scacciato, or *the Expelled*, and having provided a nurse, they went on board again with a design to return to her relations at Naples. But it happened contrary to her expectation; for the vessel, which was bound for Naples, was carried by a contrary wind to the island of Ponzo; where, getting into a little harbour, they waited for a more favourable season to pursue their voyage. There they went on shore, and finding a solitary place, she sat down all alone, to lament the fate of her dear Arrighetto, and this she did every day.

Now it happened, that whilst she was thus employed one day, without any of the ship's crew knowing where she was, their vessel was surprised by a pirate ship, and carried off with all on board. The lady Beritola, when her daily lamentation was ended, returned, as usual, to see her sons, and was surprised to find nobody; but suspecting what must have happened, and casting her eye towards the sea, she saw the ship at no great distance, dragging her little vessel after it; on which she plainly perceived that she had lost her children, as well as her husband; and seeing herself there poor and desolate, and never expecting to meet with any of them again, she fell down in a swoon upon the shore, calling upon her husband and her children. There was no one near, either with cold water, or any other means, to bring her to herself; so that her spirits might the more freely wander at their pleasure; but when she was a little recovered, then did her tears and lamentations break out afresh, whilst she called out

for her children, and ran to every cavern to find them: till, perceiving at last it was all to no purpose, and that dark night was drawing on, yet hoping still, without knowing why, she began to take some care of herself, and, leaving the sea-shore, returned to the cave where she was used to make her lamentation.

She passed that night not without infinite pain and grief; and day-light appearing, she, who had eaten nothing the evening before, being now pinched with hunger, fed upon the green herbs as well as she could, sadly considering what would become of her for the rest of her life. Whilst she was full of these melancholy reflections, she beheld a goat enter a cave near her, and, after some little stay, come out again and go into the woods: upon that she arose, went in where she saw the beast issue forth, and found two young kids, yeaned perhaps that very day, which she thought at that time the prettiest things in the world. Having milk yet in her breasts from her late delivery, she took them carefully, and applied them to her bosom, and they sucked as naturally as if she had been their mother, and from that time made no distinction between the one and the other. So the lady, thinking that she had now met with company in this solitary place, feeding also on herbs, and drinking water, and lamenting her husband and children so often as she reflected on her past life, became at length disposed to live and die there, growing as familiar with the goat as with its offspring, and herself becoming almost a wild creature by this way of life.

After some months it chanced that a vessel from Pisa arrived at the island, and continued many days, having on board a gentleman named Conrado de' Malespini, with his most virtuous lady. They had been upon a pilgrimage to visit all the holy places in Puglia, and were now returning home. To divert themselves, they went on shore with their servants and some dogs, and not far from the place where Beritola was, the dogs fell in with the two kids, which being now large, were feeding abroad, and, as they were closely pursued, fled for refuge to her in the cave. On seeing this, she started up, and getting a stick, beat the dogs off: in the meanwhile Conrado and his lady, who were following the dogs, came upon her, and beholding her all swarthy, meagre, and hairy, they were greatly surprised, and she much more so. When Conrado had called off his hounds, at her entreaties, they desired she would acquaint them who she was, and what

she did there: whereupon she related to them all that had happened to her, and her resolution to stay. Conrado, who knew her husband very well, was moved with pity at her sad story, and endeavoured, by many arguments, to draw her from her cruel design, offering either to send her home, or to keep her at his own house, where she might wait for better times, and promising to treat her, in the meanwhile, as if she were his sister. When she would not comply with these kind proposals, he left his wife with her, desiring that she would order victuals to be brought, let the wild lady put on some of her clothes, because her own were all ragged, and endeavour, by every possible means, to bring her away. The lady continued with her, and lamented her misfortunes, until the victuals and clothes were brought, when she prevailed upon her to clothe herself, and to eat; and after much entreaty, she declaring that she would never go any more where she was known, she was at last persuaded to depart with them for Lunigiana, together with the two kids and the goat, which had meanwhile come back, and fondled her most lovingly, to the great wonder of the other lady.

As soon as the weather was favourable, Madam Beritola went on board with Conrado and his lady, being followed by the goat and kids; and, because she wished to be known by nobody else, she would be called by no other name than that of the Goatherdess. The wind was favourable, and soon brought them into the river Magra, where they got on shore: and went to Conrado's castle, where Madam Beritola lived with Conrado's wife, in a widow's dress, as a lady in waiting, behaving herself with all obedience and humility, still loving and nursing her goats.

Let us now return to the pirates, who had seized upon the little bark at Ponzo, which brought Beritola thither. After leaving her there, unseen by them, they carried the rest of the people away to Genoa, where, when the booty came to be divided among the owners of the ship, it happened that, amongst other things, the nurse and two children fell to the share of one Guasparrino d'Oria, who sent them to his own house, to be kept as servants. The nurse was exceedingly sorrowful at the loss of her mistress, and the low state of life to which she saw herself and the children now reduced. She wept long and bitterly; but seeing that tears were of no avail, and that they were slaves together, she comforted herself in the best manner she was able, for though a poor woman, yet was she wise and prudent. In the first place, it

occurred to her that if the two boys were known it might turn to their disadvantage; and then she hoped besides that their affairs might take a new turn, and they regain their former condition. For these reasons she determined not to disclose their names to anybody, unless she saw a proper time for it; and she told every one who inquired about them, that they were her sons. The eldest she called not Goffredi, but Giannotto di Procida; as for the younger, she did not think it necessary to change his name. She told Goffredi, frequently, the reason why she had done so in his case, and to what dangers he would be exposed should he be known: lessons which the child, who was sensible enough, carefully observed.

They continued in the house of Guasparrino many years, poorly clad, and worse shod, employed in the most servile offices, all which they bore with great patience; but Giannotto, being now in his sixteenth year, and having a spirit much beyond the condition of a servant, was disgusted with the meanness of his station, left Guasparrino, went on board the ships which were bound for Alexandria, and voyaged to divers parts, but without being able in any way to advance himself. At last, about three or four years after his departure from Guasparrino, being grown tall and comely in person, he ascertained that his father, whom he had supposed to be dead, was yet alive, but kept in prison by King Charles. Despairing now altogether of his fortunes, he wandered up and down as a vagabond, till he came to Lunigiana, where by chance he became servant to Conrado de Malespini, and was much liked. He seldom saw his mother, she being commonly with Conrado's wife, nor did he know her any more than she recognised him; so much had time altered both since they last saw one another.

While he was living thus in the service of Conrado, it happened that a daughter of his, whose name was Spina, being the widow of one Nicholas de Grignano, returned home to her father's, and being a very pretty agreeable young lady, and not much more than sixteen years of age, she soon cast her eyes on Giannotto, and he on her, in such wise that they became intensely enamored of each other. Their mutual desires were not long without being carried into effect, and their intercourse continued for many months before it was discovered. The consequence was that, growing too confident, they were now not so cautious as they ought to have been in such an affair. One day, as they were walking

through a pleasant grove, they left the rest of their company behind, and turned aside amongst the trees, where, supposing that the others were far enough off, they made choice of a fine bed of flowers for their amorous amusement. Dallying there too long, though the time seemed short to them, they were surprised first by the mother, and afterwards by Conrado himself, who, being incensed beyond measure, ordered three of his servants to seize and carry them bound to a certain castle of his, resolving, in his extreme rage and passion, to put them both to a shameful death. The mother, though she was much troubled, and thought her daughter worthy of the severest chastisement for the crime she had committed, yet, perceiving what her husband's intention was, she could not bear that he should proceed to such extremities, and begged that he would not, in his old age, be so far hurried away with passion, as to murder his own daughter, and stain his hands with the blood of a servant; but rather show his resentment in a different manner, by committing them to close imprisonment, there to pine and lament the folly they had committed. By these and other persuasions the good lady prevented his putting them to death; and he now gave orders to have them sent to separate prisons, where they should be well watched, and kept with little food and great severity, till he should farther resolve what to do with them. What their life now was in captivity and continual tears, with more fasting than was needed for them, any one may easily imagine.

Giannotto and La Spina remaining in this comfortless condition, and a whole year having passed without Conrado taking any farther notice of them, it happened that Peter, king of Arragon, by means of Gian di Procida, caused the island of Sicily to revolt, and gained it from King Charles. On this account Conrado, who was of the Ghibelline faction, made great rejoicings, which Giannotto being informed of by some of his keepers, heaved a deep sigh, and said, "Alas! for these fourteen years have I been wandering through the world, waiting only for this event; and now the thing is come to pass, that I may be destitute of all hope, I am in prison, from which I never expect to depart with life!"— "And what," said the keeper, "hast thou to do with the affairs of princes? Or what business hast thou with Sicily?" "My heart is fit to burst," he replied, "when I call to mind the rank my father held there; for though I was but an infant when I fled thence, I can very well remember his being gov-

ernor under King Manfredi."—"And who was thy father, then?" continued the keeper. "My father," replied he, "I may now safely make known, since I am already fallen into the danger I apprehended from such a discovery. His name was, and is still, if he be living, Arrighetto Capece; and I am not Giannotto, but Goffredi; and I make no doubt, if I was at liberty, but by returning to Sicily I might obtain great promotion."

The honest man, without asking any more questions, reported all this, as soon as he had an opportunity, to Conrado, who, seeming to the keeper not to take the least notice of it, went directly to Madame Beritola, and inquired of her whether she ever had a son by Arrighetto, who was called Goffredi. The lady replied, in tears, that if her eldest son was living, he was so called, and was now twenty-two years of age. Conrado hearing this, immediately concluded it must be the same person; and if this should prove so, a method occurred to him by which he might at the same time show mercy, and take away his daughter's disgrace and that of his family, by making her Goffredi's wife.

He consequently called Giannotto secretly before him, and examined him particularly with respect to his past life; and finding, by many manifest tokens, that he was truly Goffredi the son of Arrighetto Capece, he thus addressed him:

"Giannotto, you know how great an injury you have done me in the person of my daughter; for, as I always treated you well, you ought to have considered my honour and interest in all things as became a servant: many people there are, who, had they been used by you in this manner, would have put you to an ignominious death, which my pity for you would not permit. Wherefore, seeing, as you inform me, that you are honourably descended both by father and mother, I will put an end to your trouble, if you yourself are willing, and, releasing you from your captivity, restore at once both your honour and my own. You know that my daughter La Spina, whom unluckily for you both, I found in dalliance with you, is a widow, and of a good fortune: you are no stranger either to her temper or family; concerning your own circumstances at present, I shall say not a word. Therefore I am disposed, if you are so inclined, that as you have dishonourably made her your mistress, you now make her honourably your wife; and, accepting you for my son, I give you leave to remain with me as long as you both please."

Imprisonment had made great alteration in the person of

Giannotto; but the greatness of mind which he possessed from his birth, was not at all impaired, any more than the affection he bore towards his mistress: and though he most earnestly desired what Conrado had now so frankly offered, and saw himself entirely in his power; yet could he by no means dissemble what his brave soul prompted him to speak on this occasion, and therefore he replied in this manner: "Sir, neither a desire of power, a thirst of wealth, nor any other motive, could ever induce me to plot like a traitor against your life or estate. I have loved your daughter, do still, and always shall love her, because I hold her worthy of it, and if I have committed a crime, it is a crime inseparable from youth. Would people but once call to mind that they have been young themselves, and compare our offences with their own, those offences would appear less grievous. I have always wished for what you now offer, and should have requested it long since, could I have thought it would have been granted me; it is now the more pleasing, as it was less expected; but if you intend nothing of what you say, feed me no longer with expectation, but rather send me back to my prison, where, use me as you please, I shall always love and honour you for her sake."

Conrado was astonished at hearing this, and esteeming him to be of a generous disposition, and fervent in his affection towards the lady, he valued him the more; wherefore he raised him up and embraced him, and without more delay sent for his daughter, whose confinement had made her pale and meagre, and quite a different person from what she used to be, and, by mutual consent, the espousals were solemnized on the spot. After a few days, without anybody knowing what had been done, he at once furnished them with everything that was proper, and now thinking it a fit time to please the two mothers, he called his own wife and the Goatherdess together, and to the latter he said, "What would you say now, if I should show you your eldest son married to one of my daughters?" She replied, "I can only say this, that I shall think myself more obliged to you, if possible, than I am at present, as you will restore to me what is dearer than my own life: and by doing it in that manner, you will in some measure recall all my lost hopes;" and with these words she began to weep. To his wife he then said, "And what will you think if I show you such a son-in-law?"—"Whether he be a gentleman or a peasant," answered she, "if you like it

I shall be pleased."—"Well," replied Conrado, "I hope in a few days to make you two happy women."

When the young couple had in a measure recovered their former looks, and had furnished themselves with suitable apparel, he one day asked Goffredi, if it would not add greatly to his joy could he have a sight of his mother? "I cannot believe," replied he, "that her misfortunes have suffered her to live so long; but if it should be so, nothing could be more desirable; for, by her assistance, I might reasonably expect to recover my estate in Sicily." Conrado then sent for both the ladies, who expressed the utmost satisfaction at beholding the bride, wondering nevertheless what inspiration had guided Conrado to this extraordinary courtesy in marrying her to Giannotto; whilst Beritola, considering what she had heard from Conrado, began to observe him very attentively, and moved by a hidden virtue, which had aroused in her some remembrance of her son's features in his infancy, without waiting for any other proofs, she threw her arms about his neck, whilst excess of maternal joy and pity denied her the power of utterance; but, as if they had locked up all her senses, she swooned away in his arms. He, remembering to have seen her often in the castle without knowing her, was all amazement; yet now, by mere instinct of nature, immediately called her to mind, and, blaming himself for his long insensibility, embraced her in a most tender and affectionate manner. Beritola had no sooner recovered her senses, by the help of Conrado's wife and daughter, who administered cold water and other necessary helps for such purpose, but she again began to embrace her son, using many kind and tender expressions full of maternal affection; he likewise expressing the same dutiful reverence to her. These affectionate greetings were repeated over and over, to the great joy of the beholders, whilst they recounted for each other their several misfortunes; and Conrado, having signified to his friends, who heard it with great joy, the new alliance made by him, and appointed a magnificent entertainment, suitable to the occasion, Goffredi addressed him in the following manner:

"Sir, you have made me a happy man on many accounts, and treated my mother always with the utmost respect; wherefore, that nothing may be left undone which is in your power to do, I humbly beg you would oblige my mother and myself, and grace our entertainment with the presence of my brother, who now lives as a servant in the house of

Signor Guasparrino d'Oria, who as I told you before, took us as a privateer; and at the same time, that you would also send a proper person to Sicily, to learn the state of the country, and to inform himself concerning my father, whether he be alive or dead. If he be alive, then to know fully in what state or condition he is, and to come afterwards to us, and give us an account."

The proposal made by Goffredi was so pleasing to Conrado, that without more delay he sent two discreet persons, one to Genoa, and the other to Sicily: he who went to Genoa, having met with Guasparrino, entreated him, on the part of Conrado, to send home Scacciato, or *the Expelled*, and his nurse; relating everything that Conrado had done with regard to Goffredi and his mother; which, when Guasparrino had heard, he was greatly suprised, and replied: "True it is, that I am ready to oblige Signor Conrado to the utmost of my power; I have had such a boy as you speak of, and his mother, about fourteen years, whom I shall willingly send him; but tell him from me not to be too hasty in giving credit to what Giannotto shall say (who calls himself Goffredi), because he is a more wicked boy than he may imagine." Having said this, and made the messenger welcome, he sent privately for the nurse, and questioned her about the thing; who, having heard of the rebellion in Sicily, and understanding that Arrighetto was yet living, now laid all fear aside, and told him everything as it had happened, and the reason for her acting in the manner she had done. Guasparrino, finding the accounts which the nurse and messenger gave to be entirely the same, began now to give credit to it; and inquiring more narrowly into all the circumstances, for he was a very cautious person, and finding them to fall exactly right, he grew ashamed of himself for his vile treatment of his captive, and to make him amends, since he knew of what consequence his father had been, and now was, he gave him his daughter in marriage, a beautiful young lady of about eleven years of age, and with her a very large fortune. The time of feasting being over, he went on board a galley, well armed, taking with him his son and daughter, with the messenger and nurse, and arrived at Lerici, where he was received by Conrado, and conducted thence, with all his attendants, to a castle of his, which was at no great distance, where a most noble banquet was prepared for them.

Now, as to the joy of the mother in meeting again with

her son; of the two brethren in seeing one another; and of all three, in beholding their faithful nurse; as well as the satisfaction which was manifested by all towards Guasparrino and his daughter, and by them again to the whole company, and by the whole company to Conrado, his wife, children, and friends: this was beyond expression, and therefore I refer it to your more able imagination. And, that it might be rendered still more complete, it pleased God, a most liberal giver when he makes a beginning, to add the good news of the life and prosperity of Arrighetto Capece: for even as they were feasting, and the concourse great, both of lords and ladies, it chanced that the first course was scarcely set upon the table, before the messenger arrived who had been despatched to Sicily, and brought an account, amongst other things, concerning Arrighetto, that, being closely confined by King Charles, when the insurrection first began in the country, the people ran to the prison, and having slain the guards, they set him at liberty, and appointed him their leader, he being Charles's principal enemy; and under his conduct they afterwards routed and slew many of the French, on which account he became a great favourite with King Peter, who had reinstated him in all his former possessions. The messenger further announced that he was received with the utmost joy by him, for the most welcome news, concerning his wife and son, of whom he had not received the least intelligence since he had been a prisoner, and that he had sent a yacht to bring them back, which was now at hand, with a great number of gentry on board to bear them company.

This was most welcome news; and Conrado immediately rose, with some of his friends, and went to meet the gentlemen and ladies, who were sent to Beritola and Goffredi, and after giving them a most hearty welcome, he introduced them to the banquet, which was not half over; there they were beheld by the lady and by Goffredi with such joy, that the like was scarcely ever known: and before they would sit down, they paid their compliments on the part of Arrighetto in the best manner they were able, both to Conrado and his lady, for the honour conferred on his wife and son, as well as upon himself, with the offer of anything that lay in his power which they might please to command. Turning also to Guasparrino, whose kindness came unlooked for, they assured him, that as soon as Arrighetto knew what he had done for *the Expelled*, similar acknowledgments

would be made to him. After which they sat cheerfully down with the new-married people. Nor was it that day only that Conrado feasted his son-in-law with all his relations and friends, but he continued to do so for some time, till at length they desired to depart; and taking leave in a most affectionate manner of Conrado and his lady, and of Guasparrino, they went on shipboard together, namely, Beritola and the two new-married couples, with their attendants; and the wind proving fair, they soon got to Sicily, where they were received by Arrighetto with incredible joy; and it is reported that they lived for a long period together in the utmost felicity, with thankful hearts to Heaven for the mercies received by them.

NOVEL VII.

The Sultan of Babylon sends one of his daughters to be married to the King of Algarve, but, by divers accidents in the space of four years, she falls into the hands of nine different men in different places. At length being restored to her father, she goes to the King of Algarve as a maid, and becomes his wife, as at first intended.

HAD the novel related by Emilia been but a little longer, she would have seen all her audience moved to tears of compassion for the misfortunes that had befallen Beritola; but it being now ended, the queen ordered Pamfilo to follow; and he, in obedience to her commands, proceeded thus:—It is no easy matter for us, most gracious ladies, to know what is good for us. How many, supposing if they were rich that they should then live securely and at ease, not only offer up their prayers to God, but studiously incur all kinds of danger to become so; which, when effected, has been the occasion of their losing their lives by the covetous hands of those, who, before they had attained to riches, were their entire friends. How many from a low estate have made their way to a throne, amidst a thousand dangers, and through the blood of their brethren and friends, expecting to find supreme felicity there, and have endured the infinite cares and anxieties incident to that station, but to find to their cost, at last, that poison is often mingled in the golden cups of princes. Many there are who covet some bodily advantage, as strength, beauty, etc., with which they who are endowed are taught, that death, or a most calamitous life, is often occasioned thereby. But not to speak in detail of all our frail desires,

I dare affirm, that there is not one of them which we can fix upon with any certainty of being happy in that choice. The safest way then is to leave all to the good providence of God, who best knows our wants, and is most able to supply them. Men offend in coveting many things; but you ladies sin chiefly in one point, namely, in the desire of beauty; insomuch, that not being satisfied with that share of it given you by nature, you call in the assistance of art, to improve it. It is upon this account that I shall relate what happened to a beautiful Saracen lady, who, in the space of four years, was, for her beauty, married nine several times.

It is now a long time since there lived a sultan of Babylon, called Beminedab, who was highly fortunate in all his affairs. Amongst other children, both male and female, he had a daughter named Alatiel, who, in the opinion of all that saw her, was the fairest lady in the whole world. Now forasmuch as the king of Algarve had afforded him great assistance in a defeat he had inflicted on a most numerous army of Arabians that had assailed him, and had afterwards demanded Alatiel in marriage, he consented as a most special favour: and providing a ship, well equipped for the purpose, with all necessary provisions, and sending an honourable train both of lords and ladies to bear her company, he commended her to the protection of Heaven, and sent her to his ally. The sailors, as soon as a fit opportunity offered, hoisted their sails, and leaving the port of Alexandria, sailed prosperously many days; when, having passed the island of Sardinia, and now seeming to be near the end of their voyage, on a sudden contrary winds arose, which were so boisterous, and bore so hard upon the ship, that they often gave themselves over for lost. Nevertheless, for two days together, they bravely tried all the means they could devise to weather it out; but all to no purpose, for every blast was worse than the former. Unable by any mode of reckoning to calculate where they were, or to see to any distance, on account of the clouds and darkness, the ship sprang a leak by night, not far from Majorca. Perceiving no hopes of escaping, and every one caring for himself only, they lowered a small boat into the sea, choosing rather to trust their lives to it than to the sinking ship. All the men that were in the ship crowded into the boat one after another; although those who were first down made strong resistance with their drawn weapons against other followers: and the consequence was, that thinking to avoid death by this means, they ran directly into it;

for the boat, not being able to bear them all, sank at once to the bottom, and all on board of it perished.

The ship being driven furiously by the winds, though it was leaking and half full of water, was at last stranded near the island of Majorca, no other person remaining on board but the lady and her women, all lying as it were lifeless, through the terror occasioned by the tempest. The ship struck with such violence, that it was fixed in the sand about a stone's throw from the shore; where it continued all that night, the winds not being able to move it. When day-light appeared, and the storm was somewhat abated, the lady, almost dead, lifted up her head, and began, weak as she was, to call first one and then another of her servants; but all to no purpose, for those she called for were far out of hearing. Receiving no answer, and seeing no one, she was greatly astonished; and raising herself up as well as she could, she beheld the ladies that were of her company, and some other of her women, lying all about her; and trying first to rouse one, and then another of them, she scarcely found any that had the least understanding left; so much had sickness and fear together affected them. This added greatly to her consternation; nevertheless, constrained by necessity, seeing that she was alone, she knew not where, she shook those that were living till she made them get up; and perceiving that they were utterly ignorant of what had become of all the men, and seeing the ship driven upon the sands, and full of water, she began with them to lament most grievously.

It was noon-day before they could descry any person on shore, or elsewhere, to afford them the least assistance. At length, about that time, a gentleman, whose name was Pericon da Visalgo, passing that way, with many of his servants, on horseback, upon seeing the ship, guessed what had happened, and immediately sent one of them on board, to see what was remaining in her. The servant got into the ship with some difficulty, and found the lady with the little company that was left her, who had all hidden themselves, through fear, under the deck. As soon as they saw him, they begged piteously for mercy; but finding that he did not understand their language, nor they his, they endeavoured, by signs, to inform him of their misfortune. The servant carried the best account he could of what he had seen, to his master, who ordered the ladies, and everything that was in the ship of any value, to be brought on shore, and conveyed to one of his castles, where he endeavoured to comfort them under

their misfortunes by the most generous entertainment. From the rich dress of the princess, he inferred that she was some person of great consequence, in which opinion he was confirmed by the great respect paid to her by all the women; and although she was pale and in disorder, through the great fatigue she had sustained, yet was he much taken with her beauty, and he resolved, if she had no husband, to make her his wife; or, if he could not have her as such, still not to lose her entirely. Pericon was a man of stern looks, and robust person; and having treated the lady well for some time, by which means she had recovered her beauty, he was grieved that they could not understand each other, and that he was unable to learn who she was; yet, being passionately in love, he used every engaging art he could devise to bring her to a compliance, but all to no purpose; she refused all familiarities with him, which but inflamed him the more. This the lady perceived, and finding, after some stay there, by the customs of the place, that she was among Christians, and in a land where, to make her rank known, even if she knew how, would be of no great service to her; supposing also, that, at last, Pericon would gain his will, if not by fair means, yet by force, she resolved, with a true greatness of spirit, to vanquish her evil fortune, and she enjoined her women, of whom she had but three now alive, never to disclose her quality, unless there should be hopes of regaining their liberty. She exhorted them to maintain their chastity, and declared her own fixed resolution never to yield her person to any one besides her husband; for which they all commended her, promising to preserve their honour as much as lay in their power.

Every day did Pericon's passion increase so much the more as the thing desired was near, and yet unattainable: wherefore, perceiving that entreaty was to no purpose, he resolved to try what art and contrivance could do, reserving force to the last. Having once observed that wine was pleasing to Alatiel, as a beverage she had not been accustomed to, it being forbidden by her country's law, he determined to surprise her by means of this minister of Venus. Affecting now to have given over his amorous pursuit, which she had used her best endeavours to withstand, he provided one night an elegant entertainment, at which she was present, when he gave it in charge to the servant who waited upon her, to serve her with several wines mingled together, which he accordingly did. Alatiel, suspecting no such

treachery, and pleased with the rich flavour of the wine, drank more than was consistent with modesty, and, forgetting all her past troubles, became gay and merry; so that, seeing some women dance after the custom of Majorca, she also began to dance after the manner of the Alexandrians; which, when Pericon observed, he supposed himself in a fair way of success, and plying her still with more wine, continued this revelling far into the night. At length, when the guests departed, he went with the lady into her chamber, and she being despoiled of modesty for the time, by the fumes of wine, undressed before him, as if he had been one of her women, and got into bed. He instantly followed, caught her in his arms, and took his fill of pleasure, without encountering any resistance on her part. Alatiel, who till then had never had a notion of that sort of pastime, liked it so well that she repented of not having yielded sooner to Pericon's solicitations; and thenceforth, so far was she from waiting to be pressed, that she often invited him to the sport, not by words, indeed, since she could not speak his language, but by acts which were quite as much to the purpose.

At length fortune, not content with having brought it to pass that she who was to have been the wife of a king, should become the mistress of a nobleman, prepared for her a more barbarous and cruel alliance. Pericon had a brother, twenty-five years of age, of a most commanding person, called Marato; who, having seen her, flattered himself, from her behaviour towards him, that he was not displeasing to her. Supposing, also, that nothing obstructed his happiness, except the watch which his brother kept over her, he conceived a most atrocious design, nor was it long before he carried it into effect. There chanced to be a ship in the haven at that time, laden with merchandise, bound for Chiarenza in Romania. Two young Genoese were the masters, and as they only waited for the first fair wind to go out, Marato made a contract with them, to receive him with the lady the following night. When the time came, having ordered how the thing should be managed, he went openly to the house, nobody having the least mistrust of him, and took with him some trusty friends, whom he had secured for that service, and whom he concealed about the place. Then, in the middle of the night, he opened the door to them, and they murdered Pericon as he was asleep in bed with the lady, and threatened to kill her too, if she made the least noise. Then, carrying off everything of value they could lay hands on, they hastened

MISADVENTURE OF THE SULTAN'S DAUGHTER

SECOND DAY ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ NOVEL VII

THE FIANCÉE OF
THE KING
OF ALGARVE

without discovery to the harbour, where Marato and the lady instantly went on board, whilst his companions returned about their business. The wind was fair, and the ship went to sea at once. The lady seemed for awhile sunk in hopeless grief under this second blow of misfortune; but her ravisher had a talisman endowed with great consoling virtues, and he employed it so well that by and bye she began to have the same affection for him as she had entertained for his brother.

And now all seemed to go smoothly, when fortune, as if not content with what she had already suffered, visited her with new sorrows. Her beauty and loveliness were such, as to enamour the two masters of the ship, who neglected all other business to serve and please her; taking care, all the while, that Marato should have no cause to suspect it. Being apprized of each other's love, they had a consultation together about it, and agreed to have her in common between them, as if love, like merchandise, admitted of partnership. But observing that she was narrowly watched by Marato, and their design thereby frustrated, they took the opportunity one day, as he was looking over the stern, while the ship was under full sail, to go behind and throw him overboard; and the ship had sailed on a full mile before he was missed. As soon as the lady heard that he was lost beyond recovery, she was plunged into fresh sorrow, lamenting her lost husband as much on her own account as his. The two lovers did all they could to console her, using many kind and tender expressions, which she did not understand; and after some little time, imagining that she was sufficiently comforted, they fell into a dispute together which should be the first to enjoy her. Each obstinately insisting on his own claim, high words arose, presently their knives were out, and before the ship's crew could part them, one lay dead, and the other desperately wounded. This occasioned fresh uneasiness to the lady, who now saw herself alone, without any one to advise and help her; she was fearful, also, of the resentment of the two masters' relations and friends; but the entreaties of the wounded survivor, and their speedy arrival at Chiarenza, saved her from the danger of death.

She went on shore with the wounded man, and they continued together at an inn; whilst the fame of her beauty was spread all over the city, till it reached the ears of the Prince of Morea, who was then by chance at Chiarenza. He was impatient to get sight of her; and after he had seen her, he

was so charmed, that he could think of nothing else. Being told in what manner she came thither, he began to contrive means how to obtain her; which, when the man's relations understood, they immediately sent her to him, to his great joy, and hers too, for she now thought herself freed from all danger. The prince, perceiving her rare accomplishments, joined to a matchless person, though he could have no information concerning her, yet concluded that she must be nobly descended; and such was his fondness for her, that he treated her not as a mistress, but a wife. She now recollecting what she had already suffered, and being pretty well satisfied with her present situation, began to be easy and cheerful, whilst her charms increased to that degree, that she was the chief subject of discourse throughout Romania.

Hereupon the Duke of Athens, a young and gay person, a relation also to the prince, had a mind to see her; he came, therefore, one day to Chiarenza with a noble retinue, under pretence of visiting his kinsman, as he had often done before, and was handsomely entertained. Some days after his arrival, contriving to turn the conversation to the subject of the lady's great beauty, the duke asked whether it was such as fame had reported. "Far greater," replied the prince, "but let your own eyes convince you, and not my bare assertion." The duke soliciting the prince very earnestly to gratify his curiosity, they went into Alatiel's apartment together, when she received them with great affability and cheerfulness, being apprized of their coming. Though they could not have the pleasure of conversing together, as she understood little or nothing of their language, yet they gazed upon her, the duke more especially, as a prodigy of nature, scarcely believing her to be a mortal creature; and, without perceiving how much amorous poison he imbibed through his eyes, and thinking only to gratify himself with the sight of her, he soon became over head and ears in love.

After they had parted from her, and he had time to reflect, he began to think the prince the happiest person in the universe, in being possessed of such a beauty; and, after much musing upon it, having more regard to his lust than to his honour, he resolved at all hazards to deprive him of that bliss, and secure it for himself. Having a heart to put what he had resolved in speedy execution, he set all reason and aside, and bent all the powers of his mind to devise a fit stratagem for his purpose.

One day, therefore, according to a most wicked agreement,

which he had made with the prince's valet de chambre, one Ciuriaci, he gave secret orders to have his horses and things got ready for a sudden departure; and that night, himself and a friend, both armed, were stealthily admitted by the servant into the prince's chamber. There they found the lady fast asleep, and the prince standing naked at a window that looked towards the sea, to take the cool air, the weather being very hot. Having previously instructed his friend what he would have done, the duke went softly up to the window, stabbed his kinsman with a dagger through the small of his back, and threw him out. Now the palace was seated upon the sea-shore, and very lofty; and the window at which the prince had stood, was directly over a spot little frequented, and covered by the ruins of some houses which the waves had beaten down; there was, therefore, no great likelihood, as the duke had foreseen, of the body being soon discovered. When that part of the work was over, the duke's companion took a cord, which he carried with him for that purpose, and making believe as if he was going to caress Ciuriaci, he threw it about his neck, drew it so tight as to prevent his crying out, and the duke coming to his assistance, they soon dispatched the fellow, and threw him down after the prince. This being done, and plainly perceiving that they were not heard or seen by the lady, or any one else, the duke took a light in his hand, and going softly to the bed, where she lay in a sound sleep, he gently uncovered her from head to foot, and stood beholding her for some time with the utmost admiration. If she had appeared so charming before in her clothes, what was she now in her naked loveliness? Fired with still hotter desire, reckless of the guilty deed he had just committed, he crept into bed to her, with his hands yet reeking with blood, she taking him all the while for the prince. After he had been with her for some time, he ordered his people to carry her off in such a manner that she could make no outcry; and going out at the same back door at which he had entered, he set her on horseback, and bore her away towards Athens. But, as he was married, he did not choose to bring her thither, but left her at one of his country seats on the sea shore, a little way out of town. There the unhappy princess was secretly detained a prisoner, but with strict orders to her attendants to gratify her wishes in every other respect.

The prince's servants waited that morning till nine o'clock, expecting his rising; but hearing nothing of him, they opened

the chamber doors, which were not locked, and finding nobody within, they concluded that he and the lady were gone privately to some other place to divert themselves for a few days, and therefore they thought no more about the matter. The next day it happened, by great chance, that a fool going amongst those ruinous houses where the dead bodies were lying, took hold of the cord that was about Ciuriaci's neck, and dragged him along after him. The body was recognised by many astonished beholders, who, by fair words and much persuasion, prevailed upon the fool to show them where he had found it; and there, to the great grief of the whole city, they saw the prince's body also, which they caused to be interred with all due pomp and reverence. Inquiring afterwards who could have committed so horrid a deed, and perceiving that the Duke of Athens was not to be found, but was gone privately away, they judged that he had done it, and taken the lady away with him. Immediately they elected the prince's brother to be their sovereign, inciting him to revenge the atrocious murder, and promising to assist him to the utmost of their power. The new sovereign, having ascertained beyond doubt the truth of these surmises, collected together all his relations, friends, and vassals, and mustering a powerful army, marched against the duke, who had no sooner heard of these preparations than he too levied a great army. Many princes and lords also came to his aid; amongst the rest, Constantine, son of the Emperor of Constantinople, and Emanuel, his nephew, attended by a goodly body of troops. They were gladly received by the duke, and still more so by the duchess, who was daughter to the emperor.

Things tending every day more and more to actual war, the duchess had her brother and her cousin one day into her chamber, where, with abundance of tears, she recounted to them the whole history and occasion of the war, and the ill-usage she had received from the duke on account of this woman, whom she believed he kept privately: and she conjured them very earnestly, for his honour as well as for her own ease and comfort, to give her their best assistance. The two young lords knew all this matter before, and therefore, without asking many questions, they comforted her as well as they could, and after ascertaining where the lady was kept, they took their leave. Hearing much talk of her beauty, they became very desirous of seeing her, and entreated the duke to afford them that pleasure: and he, never considering what had happened to the prince, promised to do so. Next

day he ordered a magnificent entertainment to be prepared in a pleasant garden belonging to the palace where the lady was kept, and took the two princes and some more friends to dine with her. Constantine was no sooner seated with her at table than he began to gaze upon her with intense admiration, inwardly declaring that he had never seen anything like her, and that the duke, or any other person, was excusable, who, to possess so rare a beauty, should commit any act of baseness or treachery. Gazing still more and more upon her, and evermore with growing wonder and delight, it happened to him just as it had done to the duke; for, going away quite enamoured of her, he had given over all thoughts of the war, contriving only how to steal her away from the duke, at the same time that he concealed his love from every one.

Whilst he was in this agitation, the prince was advancing near the duke's territories, whereupon the latter, with Constantine and the rest, marched out of Athens to secure the frontiers, and to prevent the prince's passing any further. After remaining with the army for some days, Constantine, whose heart was still set upon the lady, and who thought that he might more easily compass his intent now that the duke was absent, feigned himself extremely sick, and, with the duke's consent, leaving the command of his troops to Emanuel, returned to Athens to his sister. Presently, after having led the latter to talk of her husband's baseness in keeping a mistress, he told her that if she would give her consent, he would rid her of that trouble, by removing the lady out of the way. The duchess, supposing that this was spoken out of pure regard to her, and not to the lady, replied, that she should be very glad if it could be done in such a manner that the duke should never know that she was any way accessory; this Constantine fully promised, and she accordingly agreed that he should do it as he thought most advisable. He provided, therefore, a light vessel, with all secrecy, and sent it one evening near to the garden where the lady was kept, having first informed some of his people that were on board, what he would have them do. Taking others with him to the house, he was respectfully received by the servants in waiting there, and also by the lady herself, who walked with him at his request, their servants following them into the garden. There, drawing her aside towards a door which opened to the sea, as if he had business to communicate from the duke, on a signal being given, the bark was brought close to the shore, and she was seized and carried to it, whilst he,

turning back to the people that were with her, said—"Let no one stir or speak a word at the peril of their lives; for my design is not to rob the duke of his lady, but to take away the scorn he casts upon my sister." None being hardy enough to return an answer to this, Constantine went on board the vessel, and bade the men ply their oars stoutly, which they did to such effect that they reached Egina by the next morning. There they landed, and he enjoyed himself awhile with the lady, who had so much reason to deplore her fatal beauty. Thence they went to Chios, where, for fear of his father's anger, and to prevent her being taken away from him, he chose to abide as in a place of security: and though she seemed uneasy for a time, yet she soon recovered, as she had done before, and the consolations afforded her by Constantine, reconciled her to her new lot.

In the meantime Osbech, king of the Turks, who was constantly at war with the emperor, came by chance to Smyrna, and hearing how Constantine was leading a lascivious life at Chios, with a mistress he had stolen, and with no provision made for his safety, he went privately one night with some armed vessels, and made a descent on the island, surprising many people in their beds before they knew of his coming upon them, and killing all that stood upon their defence; and after he had burnt and destroyed the whole country, he put the prisoners and the booty which he had taken on board, and returned to Smyrna. Upon inspecting his captives, Osbech, who was a young man, saw Alatiel, and knowing that she was Constantine's mistress, because she was found asleep in his bed, he rejoiced greatly, and took her for his own wife, and they lived together very happily for several months.

Before this happened, the emperor had been making a treaty with Bassano, King of Cappadocia, who was to fall on Osbech on one side, whilst he attacked him on the other; but they could not come to a full agreement, because Bassano stipulated for some things which the emperor was unwilling to grant; but now, hearing of what had befallen his son, and being in the utmost concern, he immediately closed with the King of Cappadocia, requesting him to march with all expedition against Osbech, whilst he himself was preparing to fall upon him from another quarter. When Osbech heard of this, he assembled his army before he should be surrounded by two such mighty princes, and marched to meet the King of Cappadocia, leaving his lady behind, with a faithful ser-

vant of his, at Smyrna; and a battle soon ensued, in which Osbech's army was entirely routed, and himself slain.

Bassano advanced victorious to Smyrna, the people making their submission to him all the way as he went. But now Osbech's servant, Antiochus, who had the lady in charge, although he was in years, yet, seeing her so beautiful, and forgetting the regard which was due to his lord, soon became in love with her himself; and, as he understood her language, it was a great comfort to her, because she had been forced to live for some years like a deaf and dumb person, for want of understanding other people, or being understood by them. This gave him great advantages, and whilst his master was warring abroad, he spared no pains to gain her consent, in which he succeeded so well, that from amicable intercourse they soon advanced to amorous dalliance. On hearing, however, that Osbech was slain, and that Bassano was carrying all before him, they did not wait for his coming upon them, but fled privately to Rhodes, taking with them everything of value belonging to Osbech. They had not been there long before Antiochus was taken extremely ill. There happened to be with him a merchant of Cyprus, who was a great friend of his, and finding himself at the point of death, he resolved to bequeath to him his wealth, and the care of his dear lady. Calling them both to him, therefore, he said:—"I find myself declining apace, which grieves me much, because I had never more pleasure in living than at present; yet one thing is a great comfort to me, namely, that I shall die in the arms of those two persons whom I love and value beyond all the rest of the world, that is to say, in yours, my dearest friend, and in that lady's, whom I have loved, ever since I have known her, more than my own life. I am uneasy, indeed, when I consider that I leave her here a stranger, and destitute both of help and advice, and should be infinitely more so if you were not with us, who, I know, will take the same care of her, on my account, as you would of myself. Therefore I entreat you, in case I should die, to take my affairs, and her too, under your protection, and to act, with regard to both, as you think will be most for the comfort of my departed soul.—And you, my dearest love, let me beg of you never to forget me, that I may boast, in the next world, that I have been beloved by the fairest lady that ever nature formed; assure me of these two things, and I shall die satisfied."

The merchant and lady were both much concerned, and

promised to fulfil his desires, if he should chance to die; and soon afterwards he departed this life, when they took care to have him decently interred. This being done, and the merchant having despatched all his affairs, and wanting to return home in a Catalan ship that was there in port, he questioned the lady, to know what she intended to do, because it became necessary for him to go back to Cyprus. She was willing, she said, to go with him, hoping that for the love he bore towards his friend he would regard her as his own sister. He replied, that he was ready to oblige her in everything; and, that he might the better defend her from all injuries whatever, till they came to Cyprus, he suggested that she should rather call herself his wife than his sister. Going then on board ship, they had a cabin and one little bed allotted them, agreeably to the account they had given of themselves, by which means that thing was brought about, which neither of them intended when they came from Rhodes; for they forgot all the fine promises they had made to Antiochus, and before they reached Baffa, where the Cyprian merchant dwelt, they began to consider themselves as man and wife.

Now a certain gentleman happened to arrive at Baffa about that time, on his own private affairs, whose name was Antigono, one advanced in years, and of more understanding than wealth; for by meddling much in the affairs of the King of Cyprus, he had found fortune very unkind to him. One day, when the merchant was gone about his business into Armenia, Antigono happened to pass by the house where Alatiel lodged, and seeing her at the window, he took more than ordinary notice of her, on account of her beauty: till at length he began to recollect that he had seen her somewhere before, but could by no means remember where. She, also, who had long been the sport of fortune, and knew not that the time was now drawing near when her sorrows were to have an end, as soon as she saw Antigono, remembered that she had seen him in no mean station in her father's service at Alexandria. Having now great hopes of regaining her former dignity by his advice and assistance, she took the opportunity of the merchant's absence to send for him. On his coming to her, she modestly asked him whether he was not Antigono of Famagosta, as she really believed. He answered, that he was, and added,—"Madam, I am convinced that I know you, but I cannot call to mind

where it is that I have seen you; therefore, if it be no offence, let me entreat you to tell me who you are."

The lady, perceiving him to be the same person, wept very much, and throwing her arms about his neck, asked him at last, as one confounded with surprise, if he had never seen her at Alexandria? Then he immediately knew her to be Alatiel, the sultan's daughter, whom they supposed to have been drowned; and being about to pay homage to her, she would not suffer him to do it, but made him sit down. He then, in a most humble manner, asked her where she had been, and whence she now came? because for some years it had been believed, through all Egypt, that she was drowned. She replied, "I had much rather it had so happened than to have led such a life as I have done; and I believe my father, if he knew it, would wish the same." With these words the tears ran down her cheeks in great abundance. "Madam," he replied, "do not afflict yourself before it is necessary to do so; tell me only what has happened to you; perhaps it may be of such a nature that, by the help of God, we may find a remedy." "Antigono!" replied the fair lady, "I think when I see you that I behold my father: moved, therefore, with the like duty and tenderness that I owe to him, I shall reveal to you what I might have kept secret. There are few persons that I should desire to meet with sooner than yourself to advise me; if, therefore, when you have heard my whole story, you think there is any probability of restoring me to my former dignity, I must beg your assistance; if you think there is none, then I conjure you to tell no person living that you have either seen or heard anything about me."

After this preamble, she gave a full account of what had befallen her, from the time of her shipwreck to that very hour, shedding abundance of tears during the whole relation. Antigono manifested sincere concern at what he had heard, and after thinking some little time about it, "Madam," he said, "since it has never been known, in all your misfortunes, who you were, I will restore you to your father, to whom you shall be more dear than ever, and afterwards you shall be married to the King of Algarve." On her inquiring how that could be brought about, he let her know in what manner he intended to do it; and to prevent all danger from delay, he returned directly to Famagosta, and waiting upon the king, thus addressed him:—"My liege, you may, if you please, do great honour to yourself, and service to me, who

am impoverished on your account, and that, too, without incurring any expense." The king desiring to know by what means, Antigono answered: "A young lady is just come to Baffa, daughter to the sultan, who was generally thought to have been drowned, and who, to preserve her honour, has undergone great calamities, and is now in poverty, and desirous of returning to her father: if, therefore, your majesty will deign to send her home under my conduct, it will redound greatly to your honour, and prove much to my advantage, nor can the sultan ever forget the favour." The king moved by a truly royal spirit, replied, that he was well pleased with the proposal, and immediately had Alatiel brought in great state to Famagosta, where she was received with all honour and respect, both by himself and the queen; and being questioned by them concerning her misfortunes, she made such answers as she had been taught beforehand by Antigono.

A few days afterwards, at her own request, she was sent with a great retinue both of lords and ladies, and conducted all the way by Antigono, to the sultan's court; where, with what joy they were all received, it is needless here to mention. When they had rested awhile after their journey, the sultan became desirous to know how it happened that his daughter was now living, and where she had been all this time, without his being ever able to hear a word about her. Thereupon Alatiel, who had all Antigono's lectures perfectly by heart, gave her father the following narration:

"You must know, my dear father, that about twenty days after my departure from you, our ship was split in the night by a violent tempest, and driven on the western coasts; nor did I ever learn what befell the men that were in it: I only remember this, that when daylight appeared, and I seemed recovered, as it were, from death to life, certain peasants of the country spying the wreck, came to plunder it; whilst I was carried first on shore, with two of my women, who were immediately borne away by some young fellows, and taken different ways, so that I could never learn what became of either of them. I also was seized by two of them, making the best defence I could; and as they were dragging me towards a wood by the hair of my head, four persons on horseback came riding by, when they immediately left me and fled. Then the gentlemen on horseback, who appeared to possess some authority, came to me, and we spoke to each other, without either knowing what the other said. At last,

after conferring together, they sat me upon one of their horses, and carried me to a monastery of religious women, according to their laws, where I was kindly received, and always treated with honour; and there I joined them in paying great devotion to a certain idol of theirs, called San Cresci in Val Cava,* which is held in the highest esteem by the women of that country. After I had been there for some time, and learnt a little of their language, they began to inquire of me wno I was, and whence I came; and I (fearful of telling the truth, lest they should turn me out as an enemy to their religion) made them believe that I was daughter of a gentleman of Cyprus, who sending me to be married to one of Crete, we happened to be driven thither by ill weather, and shipwrecked. Conforming to their customs in many things, for fear of the worst, I was asked, at length, by the chief among them, whom they call Lady Abbess, whether I desired to return to Cyprus? I answered, that there was nothing I desired more. But she, tender of my honour, would never trust me with any persons that were going to Cyprus, till, about two months ago, certain French gentlemen with their ladies came that way, one of whom was related to the abbess; and, understanding that they were going to visit the holy sepulchre at Jerusalem, where he whom they believe to be God was buried, after he had been put to death by the Jews, the abbess recommended me to them, and desired that they would deliver me to my father at Cyprus. What respect and civilities I received both from the gentlemen and their ladies, would be needless to mention. Accordingly we went on ship-board, and came in a few days to Baffa, where I arrived a stranger to every person, and not knowing what to say to these gentlemen, who were to present me to my father; when behold (by the great providence of God), the first person I met with upon the shore was Antigono. I called to him in our own language (that none of them might understand us) and desired him to own me as his daughter. He easily understood my meaning, and showing great tokens of joy, entertained them as well as his narrow circumstances would allow, and brought me to the King of Cyprus, who received and sent me hither, with such marks of respect as I am no way

* This saint is not in the calendar—perhaps because his rites are performed in secret. His attributes are implied in his name.

able to relate: if there be anything omitted in this relation, Antigono, who has often heard the whole from me, will report it."

Antigono, then turning to the sultan, said, "My lord, according both to her own account, and the information of the gentlemen and their wives, she has said nothing but truth. One part only she has omitted, as not suiting with her great modesty to report, namely, what the gentlemen and their ladies told me of the most virtuous life that she led amongst those religious women, and their great concern at parting, which, if I were fully to recount to you, would take up both this day and night too. Let it suffice, then, that I have said enough (according to what I could both hear and see) to convince you that you have the fairest as well as the most virtuous daughter of any prince in the world."

The sultan was overjoyed with this relation; begging, over and over, that God would pour down his blessings on all who had showed favour to his daughter; and particularly the King of Cyprus, who had sent her home so respectfully. Having bestowed great gifts upon Antigono, he gave him leave to return to Cyprus; and sent letters, as also a special ambassador to the king, to thank him on her account. And now, desiring that what he had formerly proposed should take effect: namely, that she should be married to the King of Algarve; he wrote to give him a full relation of the whole matter, adding, that he should send for her, if he desired the match to proceed. The king was much pleased with the news, and sent in great state, and received her as his queen; whilst she, who had passed through the hands of eight men, now came to him as a pure virgin, and lived happily with him all the rest of her life:—so true is the old saying, "Kissed lips lose no favour, but renew themselves like the moon."

[This story is taken from the romance of Xenophon Ephesius, and has furnished La Fontaine with his tale of 'La Fiancée du Roi de Garbe.']

NOVEL VIII.

The Count d'Angiers, being falsely accused, is banished from France, and leaves his two children in different parts of England. Returning afterwards privately out of Ireland, he finds them settled in great repute. Thence he goes as a common servant into the King of France's army, and his innocence being made public at last, he is restored to his former dignity.

The ladies sighed very much upon hearing the various accidents that had befallen the fair lady; but who can say what it was that gave occasion to those sighs? Perhaps there were some ladies present who sighed more because they had not been so often married as she, than out of any pity for the poor woman. But, be that as it may, after they had laughed much at Pamfilo's conclusion, the queen next called upon Eliza, who began in this manner:—We have chosen a most spacious field for the subject of this day; nor is there one among us who could not run ten courses in it as well as one; so copious are the great and wonderful changes of fortune! And, therefore, amongst such an infinity of things, as I am to recount one, let it be as follows:

When the Roman empire passed from the French to the Germans, an utter enmity and continual war arose between the two nations; wherefore the King of France and his son, as well for the defence of their own kingdom, as the annoyance of their adversaries, raised a great and powerful army, consisting of all their kindred and allies, besides the force of their own kingdoms, to go against the enemy. But before they set out upon their expedition, they chose not to leave the state without a governor; and knowing Gaultier, Count d'Angiers, to be a wise and worthy person, and one entirely devoted to their interests, and also expert in military affairs, although he seemed rather designed for a life of ease and inactivity than martial toils, they made him viceroy during their absence, and then set forwards on their expedition.

The count began to execute his office with all due care and discretion, conferring, on all occasions, with the queen and her daughter-in-law, and honouring them as his mistresses and superiors, although they were left subject to his guidance and authority. Now he had a very graceful person, was about forty years of age, and as good-natured and agreeable as man could be; nor could the world show a more complete gentleman in all respects than himself. Whilst the king, therefore, and his son were employed in the war,

it happened that Gaultier's lady died, leaving him two children, a boy and a girl; and he being much at the ladies' court, consulting with them on the affairs of the kingdom, the king's son's wife cast her eyes upon him, and being struck both by his person and his manners, conceived a violent passion for him in secret. Considering her own youth, and his widowed state, she concluded that her desires would be the more readily gratified, and that she had no impediment to apprehend but the shame of making the discovery, which she soon overcame.

Being one day alone, and thinking it a fit opportunity, she sent for the count under pretence of business. The count, who was far from suspecting her intentions, came immediately to her, and sitting down beside her on a couch, by her desire, begged to know her commands. He repeated his question twice without receiving any answer; at last, incited by her passion, trembling and blushing, her eyes moist with tears, and with broken and confused words, she thus began: "My dear lord and friend, it cannot have escaped your most acute judgment, how great is the frailty of both the sexes, and, for divers reasons, how much more it displays itself in one individual than another; therefore the very same offence, before an equitable judge, will be differently punished according to the different quality of the offenders. Besides, who will deny that a poor man or woman, who has no other subsistence but what is earned by his or her daily labour, is more blameable, should either be seduced and carried away by love, than a lady of wealth and leisure, who has nothing to think of but how to divert and please herself? Every one must allow the distinction: this will be a sufficient excuse, therefore, for a lady who gives way to such a passion, supposing her, at the same time, to make choice of a wise and worthy person on whom she fixes her affection. These circumstances, thus concurring in myself, not to mention my youth, and the absence of my husband, plead strongly in my behalf, and if they have their due weight with you, I may expect that you will afford me that advice and assistance I now require from you. I must confess, that, not being able, on account of my husband's distance from me, to resist my most earnest desires, living also a life of ease and indolence, as you see, I have suffered myself to be quite led aside by them; which, though it would redound but little to my credit should it be known, yet, so long as it is a secret between us, there can be no room for reproach, and let me tell you, that

love has been so gracious to me, that far from taking away my understanding, it has rather enlightened it, by presenting you to me as an object worthy of my affection, a person whom I esteem as the most accomplished nobleman this day in France, and one at present without a wife, as I am without a husband; wherefore I entreat you, by the tender regard I have for you, that you would vouchsafe to show the same towards me, and pity my youth, which consumes for your sake, even as ice melts before the fire."

The tears now poured down her cheeks so fast that she could say no more; but overcome with emotion, she let her head sink upon his bosom. The count being a person of the strictest honour, began to reprimand her fond and idle love; and when she would have thrown her arms around his neck, he pushed her from him, protesting that he would be cut in pieces before he would so wrong his lord and master himself, or suffer others to do it.

At this unexpected reply, the lady forgot all her love, and shrieked out in a most vehement rage, "Villain! shall my request be despised by thee in this manner? As thou wouldst have me die, so help me God, I will bring thee to death, or force thee to fly thy country." And with these words, tearing her hair and clothes, she cried out most violently, "Help! help! the Count d'Angiers would force me."

The count, fearing that his conscience would not countervail the envy of the court, and that more credit would be given to the princess's wicked story than to his own innocence, hastened out of the chamber as fast as he could, fled to his own house, set his children on horseback without delay, and made the best of his way to Calais.

At the lady's cries, many persons rushed in, who, seeing her in that condition, and hearing the cause of her outcry, not only believed what she told them, but concluded that the count's debonnaire appearance and demeanour at court had been assumed expressly to effect his guilty purpose; they ran, therefore, in the utmost fury to his house to seize him, and not finding him there, they stripped it of everything of value, and pulled it down to the ground. This disagreeable news soon reached the ears of the king and prince in the camp, and they being greatly incensed at it, sentenced the offender and all his descendants to perpetual banishment, offering a reward to that person who should deliver him up alive or dead! The count, who grieved to think that by his flight he had seemed to confess his guilt, arrived at

Calais with his children, without making himself known to any person; thence he went direct to England, and arrived in London in mean apparel, having by the way taught his children these two things; first, to bear patiently the poverty to which fortune had reduced them without any fault of theirs: and secondly, to be exceedingly cautious never to reveal whence they came, or whom they belonged to, if they had the least regard for his life. His son, named Louis, was about nine years of age, and his daughter Violante seven; and they both attended more to their father's admonition than could have been expected from their youth, as will appear by the sequel. Thinking it best for their greater security to change their names, he called the boy Pierrot, and the girl Jeannette, and they went about the city asking charity like common French beggars.

Now it happened, that, as they were waiting at a church door one morning, a certain great lady, who was wife to one of the king's principal officers of state, cast her eyes upon them, and asked the father where they came from, and were those his children? He replied, that he came from Picardy, and that the misbehaviour of his eldest son, who had turned out very badly, had obliged him to quit his country with these two other children. The lady, who was of a compassionate temper, was pleased with the looks of the girl, and she said to him, "Honest man, if thou be content to leave thy daughter with me, I like her countenance so much that I would willingly take her; and if she behave well, I will in due time provide her a husband, so that she shall live comfortably all her life." He was rejoiced at the offer, and with tears in his eyes resigned the child up to the lady, recommending her to her in the most affectionate manner.

Having thus disposed of his daughter, and well knowing to whom, he resolved to stay there no longer, but begging his way all across the island, and his son along with him, at length, not without the utmost fatigue, being unused to travel on foot, he came into Wales, where dwelt another great lord, an officer also and servant of the king. To his palace, which afforded relief to all, they repaired for support. It happened just then that the lord's son and some other young noblemen were diverting themselves with running, leaping, and some other youthful exercises; and Pierrot, making one among them, outdid them all in every sport. The nobleman, seeing this, was mightily pleased with the boy, and inquired whom he belonged to? and being told

that he was a poor man's son, who came there to beg alms, the lord asked the father to give the boy to him. The count, who desired nothing so much, freely consented, though their parting was a little grievous; and having now provided for both his children, he determined to stay no longer in England, but, as soon as he had an opportunity, he passed into Ireland, and came to Stanford, where he hired himself to a certain knight, who belonged to the retinue of an earl in that country, and there he did the duty of a common servant for many years.

In the meantime Violante, now called Jeannette, who continued with the lady at London, increased in beauty, and every accomplishment, as well as in stature; insomuch that she became the delight both of the lord and lady, as well as of every one that knew her. Whilst the lady, who had no other notion of her quality than what she had received from herself, was thinking of marrying her according to her supposed rank, God, the just rewarder of merit, seeing that she was nobly born, and punished only for other people's wickedness, was pleased to order it otherwise. The lady had an only son by her lord, of whom they were both exceedingly fond, and deservedly so, on account of his excellent disposition and character. He was about six years older than Jeannette, and beholding her extraordinary beauty and merit, he was so much in love, that he cared for no other woman. Supposing, however, that she was of low extraction, he was afraid to demand her of his father and mother, and, through fear of being reprimanded for placing his affections so low, he kept them smothered in his breast; for which reason they preyed more upon him than if he had divulged them, till at length he fell into a grievous fit of sickness. Hereupon several physicians were sent for, who had regard to one symptom after another, till, not being able to make out what his disorder was, they gave him over. This occasioned the utmost affliction both to his father and mother, who were continually requesting him to tell them the secret cause of his malady? to which he either made no answer but by sighs, or said that he found himself continually wasting.

Now, one day it happened that a certain young but profoundly skilful physician was sitting by his bedside, and feeling his pulse, when Jeannette, who attended carefully upon him, out of respect to his mother, chanced to come into the room. Upon seeing her, the young gentleman, without uttering a word, or making one sign, conceived

more strongly in his heart the passion of love, and his pulse began to beat higher than usual; which the physician perceiving with surprise, kept his fingers some time upon it, to see how long that difference would last. As she went out of the room again the pulse abated; wherefore, thinking that he had now found out in some measure what the disorder was, the physician pretended that he wanted to speak to Jeannette, and had her called back, he still holding his patient by the hand: she returned instantly; the pulse beat as before, and subsided at her departure. The physican, now fully satisfied, got up, and taking the father and mother apart, spoke to them in this manner:— "The welfare of your son is not in the power of physicians, but it lies in the hands of Jeannette, whom I find, by certain tokens, that he is desperately in love with; although, by what I can perceive, she knows nothing of it. You see now what you have to do, if you value his life."

The lord and lady were well enough pleased to hear there was one way to save their son's life, though the fear of being obliged to do what they most dreaded gave them concern: namely, their marrying her to him; therefore, after the physician was departed, they went together to their son, and the lady said to him as follows: "I could never have believed, my dear, that you would have concealed any of your wants from me, especially since your not being gratified in that respect has been attended with such evil consequences; for you might have been confident, as you may still, that there is nothing which I would not do for your ease and welfare, as much as for my own. But since you have done so, God has been more merciful to you than you would be to yourself, for I now know that it is all occasioned by love, whoever the person is: and why should you have been ashamed to tell me? It is natural to one of your age; and were you a stranger to love, I should think you of little worth. Then lay yourself open to me, and cast away all that drooping and melancholy, which has brought this disorder upon you, assuring yourself, that there is nothing you can desire of me, wherein I will not gratify you to the utmost of my ability, for I love you as dearly as my own life. Away then, with this bashfulness, and tell me plainly if I can be of service regarding this love of yours; and if you find me not in earnest, then believe me to be the most cruel of mothers."

The young gentleman changed colour at hearing these words; but considering afterwards that none could sooner serve him than his mother, he spoke to her without the least reserve. "Madam," he said, "nothing has made me keep my love a secret so much as what I have observed in many people when they grow into years; they forget that they ever were young: but now I find you considerate in that point, I shall not only confess your suspicion to be true, but will also name the person to you, provided you will, according to promise, use your best endeavours in my behalf; and by that means you may save my life." The lady, thinking to serve him in a different manner from what he himself intended, bade him speak out, and she would endeavour that he should have his will. He then replied:—"Madam, the beauty and agreeable behaviour of Jeannette, and her not pitying me, or being even sensible how much I love her, which I have yet revealed to no person living, have brought me to this condition. If, therefore, you make not your word good to me, you may depend upon it my life is short." She, thinking it a more proper time to comfort than reprove him, said, with a smile, "And have you then languished so long for this? Have a good heart, and when you grow better leave the matter to me."

The young spark, full of hopes, began now to show speedy symptoms of amendment, to the great comfort of his mother, who was contriving how to perform her promise; and one day, calling Jeannette to her, she began, by way of discourse, to ask her if she ever had a sweetheart? The girl blushed, and replied, "Madam, it ill becomes a poor young woman like myself, who is driven from her own house, and subject to other people's will and pleasure, to think of love." Her mistress then rejoined: "If you have no lover, I will procure one for you, that you may live with some comfort; for so pretty a girl as you are should never be without one." "Madam," said Jeannette, "as you have taken me from my father, and brought me up like your own child, I am bound to do all in my power to please you: but in this particular I think I am in the right not to do it. If you mean to give me a husband, him I shall respect, but no one else. For, of all that my ancestors possessed, there is nothing now remaining to me but their virtue, and this I intend to keep as long as I live." This was quite contrary to the lady's intention in the promise she had made her son; however, like a most prudent lady, she affected to commend her for

it, and said, "But if the king, who is young, should have a fancy for you, would you deny him?" "His majesty might use force," Jeannette immediately replied; "but he should never have my consent, but upon terms of honour." The lady, seeing what her resolution was, said no more; but resolved to put her to proof; saying to her son, that, when he got well, she would put them into a room together, and he might do with her as he pleased; for it was performing a base office for her to proceed any farther in that way for him. This was by no means pleasing to the young gentleman, who relapsed immediately upon it: which the lady perceiving, she laid open her intention to Jeannette, and found her more resolute than ever. Her husband being made acquainted with the whole matter, it was agreed now by them (though much against their inclinations), that he should marry her; they preferring their son's life, with a wife much beneath him, to his death without one. This was soon put in execution, to the great joy of Jeannette, who gave thanks to Heaven for its mercy vouchsafed towards her: but all the while she would make no other discovery of herself, than that she was daughter to a person in Picardy. They lived afterwards very happily together.

Let us now return to Pierrot, whom we left in Wales with a great officer belonging to the King of England: he grew much in favour with his lord, and being graceful and manly in person, and more expert at all military exercises than any one in the country, was known every where by the name of Pierrot the Picard; and as God had been gracious to his sister, so was he no less kind and merciful to him: for the plague happened to break out in that country, which swept away half the people, and a great part of those who were left had fled for refuge into other lands; so that the nation appeared quite desolate. In this mortality, the lord and lady, with their son, brethren, nephews, and near relations, all died, and there was none of the family left besides an only daughter, just of age to marry, and a few servants. As soon as the plague was over, she took him for her husband, on account of his extraordinary merit, and made him lord of all her inheritance. And it was not long before the King of England, hearing of the late lord's death, and knowing Pierrot's worth and valour, substituted him in his place, and gave him the same power and command. Such was the fate of the two innocent children of Count d'Angiers, whom he had left destitute.

It was now eighteen years since he had fled from Paris. He had suffered great hardship during his abode in Ireland, and as he was now grown old, he was desirous to know what was become of his children. Being quite altered as to his person, and finding himself become more robust by exercise than he had been in his youth, which he had spent in ease and indolence, he left the service where he had been for so long a time, and set forward in a mean dress for England. Arriving at the place where he had left Pierrot, he found him to be a great and mighty lord, and in perfect health, which gave him the utmost satisfaction; but yet he was resolved not to discover himself, till he should know what was become of Jeannette. Travelling still on for London, and inquiring cautiously there concerning the lady with whom he had left his daughter, he discovered that Jeannette was married to her son, which pleased him infinitely, esteeming all his past sufferings as nothing, since he had found both his children alive, and in prosperity. Desirous now of seeing her, he repaired to the house like a poor man, and was taken notice of by James Lamiens (for that was the name of Jeannette's husband), who had pity on him, and ordered one of his servants to give him relief. Jeannette had several children, the eldest of whom was about eight years old, all very beautiful; and seeing the count begin to eat, they all came about him, and were as much pleased with him, as if by some secret instinct they had known him to be their grandfather: whilst he, knowing them to be his grandchildren, showed a thousand little fondnesses towards them, which made them unwilling to leave him, when their tutor would have called them away. On hearing this, Jeannette came out of her chamber, and threatened to whip them, if they would not obey their master; this set the children crying, and they said, they had much rather stay with the honest man, who loved them better than their master did; which made the lady and count both laugh heartily.

The count arose, not as a father, but like a poor man, to pay his reverence to his daughter, as to a great lady; feeling great pleasure at the sight of her, whilst she had not the least knowledge of him: so much was he altered, having grey hairs, a long beard, and a swarthy, meagre countenance, that he was nothing like the same person. The lady, now seeing how unwilling the children were to go away, ordered their master to let them stay a little. In the mean time, her husband's father came home, and being told this circum-

stance by the master, and holding her always in great contempt, he said, "Let them stay, with a mischief to them! they only shew whence they are descended; they are beggars by their mother's side, therefore no wonder they herd with beggars." The count was much grieved at hearing these words, but was forced to bear this injury, as he had done many others. The lady's husband had taken notice all this time of the children's fondness towards the count, and was uneasy at it; yet so tender was he of them, that rather than make them uneasy, he gave orders that if the honest man was willing to stay in his service, he should be received. He replied that he should be glad of it, but was only able to look after horses, which he had been used to all his life. He had a horse assigned him, therefore, to take care of, and when his business was over, he used to play with the children.

Whilst fortune had thus disposed of the Count d'Angiers and his children, it came to pass, that, after making many treaties with the Germans, the King of France died, and was succeeded by that son, whose wife had occasioned the count's banishment; and the last truce being now expired, a bloody war broke out afresh, when the King of England, who was his kinsman, sent him large supplies of soldiers, under the command of Pierrot, one of his generals, and James Lamiens, son to another of his generals, with whom the count went as a servant, when he did more service, both by his valour and good counsel, than was expected from him. In the course of the war, the Queen of France chanced to be taken ill, and finding herself past all hopes of recovery, made a confession of all her sins to the Archbishop of Rouen, esteemed by all as a most holy person; and, amongst other things, she mentioned the great wrong she had done to the Count d'Angiers; nor was she content with speaking this to him only, but she also declared it before many other worthy persons; desiring their intercession with the king, that, if the count or his children were any of them living, they might be restored to their former condition. Soon after this she died, and was honourably interred.

This confession being reported to the king, after much concern for the injury done to so great a man, he issued a proclamation, that if any person could give tidings of the count, or his children, they should be well rewarded, since the queen had declared him innocent of the crime for which he had fled his country; and that his majesty meant

to exalt him to the same, or even greater honours than he had before. When the count heard this, he went immediately to James Lamiens, and desired him to go along with him to Pierrot; saying, he would then show them what the king desired. Being all met together, the count declared to Pierrot that he was now resolved to discover himself; for, "Pierrot," says he, "James Lamiens, who is here present, has married your sister, and has had no fortune with her: therefore I intend that he shall have the benefit of the king's proclamation, for producing first yourself, as son to the Count d'Angiers, secondly, Violante your sister and his wife, and lastly myself, who am the Count d'Angiers and your father." Pierrot, hearing this, and looking steadfastly upon him, soon recognised him, and fell down with tears at his feet: whilst James Lamiens was overcome with so much wonder and joy together, that he scarcely knew what to say; and blushing for the little respect he had showed him, he humbly asked pardon, which the count readily granted. When they had talked over their several fortunes, sometimes in tears, and then again in joy, they would have had the count put on suitable apparel, which he would by no means consent to, being desirous that James Lamiens should first secure the reward, and, by presenting him in that garb, make the shame for his ill usage so much the greater.

James thereupon went with the count and Pierrot before the king, offering for the promised reward to produce both the count and his children. The king then ordered a most magnificent present to be brought, telling him it was his own upon those conditions. James then stepped back a little, and presented the count as his servant, and Pierrot, saying, "Behold, sir, the father and son; as for the daughter, she is my wife; but, with the leave of Heaven, you shall see her before it is long." The king, on hearing this, looked earnestly at the count, and, notwithstanding his being so much changed, soon recognized him, and with tears in his eyes raised him from the ground, on which he was kneeling, and kissed and shook him by the hand: he welcomed Pierrot also in a most friendly manner, and ordered that the count should have clothes, servants, horses, and everything suitable to his quality, which was accordingly done. The king showed great respect also to James Lamiens, and inquired particularly about everything that had befallen the families. After James had received the promised reward, the count said to him: "Receive this royal bounty at the hands of his

majesty, and remember to tell your father, that your children and my grandchildren are not meanly descended by the mother's side." James received the presents, and sent for his wife and mother to Paris; Pierrot also brought his lady, and they were received with the utmost joy by the count, to whom the king restored all he had lost, with large additions of fortune. They had afterwards permission to return home, leaving the count at Paris, where he continued to his dying day in more repute and glory than ever.

[The revenge taken by the French princess for a slighted passion, is as old as the story of Joseph and Potiphar's wife, or as that of Bellerophon, though it has been directly imitated by Boccaccio from that of Perdella Broccia and the Lady of Brabante, in Dante. The physician's discovery of the young Englishman's love for Jeannette is taken from Plutarch's story of Antiochus and Stratonice.]

NOVEL IX.

Bernard of Genoa is imposed upon by one Ambrose, loses his money, and orders his wife, who is quite innocent, to be put to death. She makes her escape, and goes in man's dress into the service of the Sultan; there she meets with the deceiver; and, sending for her husband to Alexandria, has Ambrose punished; she then resumes her former habit, and returns with her husband, in wealth, to Genoa.

ELIZA having discharged her duty by the last moving story, the queen, who was of a most graceful person, taking the next turn upon herself, spoke with a smile to this effect: —We must make good our agreement with Dioneo; and therefore, as only he and I remain to speak, I shall begin with my story, and leave him to the last, as he has desired. It is a common saying, that the deceiver lies at the mercy of the deceived; which I think can only be proved true by circumstances of that kind, which have happened in the world; this, then, I propose to show you, hoping a relation of this sort will not be disagreeable, to the end you may be upon your guard against such as would deceive you.

There happened together in an inn at Paris some Italian merchants, who had come thither upon their different occasions; and meeting at supper one night, and conversing merrily of one thing after another, they came at last to talk of their wives, whom they had left behind them: when one of them said, in a jesting way, "I do not know what my wife

does with herself, but I am sure if I meet with anything that pleases me, I forget my love for her, and make use of the opportunity."—"And so do I," quoth another; "for whether I believe it or not, my wife will do as she pleases." A third was of the same opinion, and all seemed to agree that their wives at home lost no time in their absence. Only one man among them all, named Bernard Lomellin, of Genoa, avowed the contrary; declaring, that he had a wife, in whom were centred all the virtues that could adorn either sex; that she was young and beautiful in her person; that she was mistress of her needle; that no man-servant waited with more dexterity at his master's table, than he was served by her, she being thoroughly discreet and well bred; that, besides her skill in horsemanship, and the management of a hawk, there was no merchant understood accounts better; and coming at length to what began the dispute, he declared, with an oath, that no woman upon earth could be more virtuous and chaste than she was; for he firmly believed, were he to be absent from her for ten years, she would have to do with no other person.

Amongst the merchants who had been talking upon this subject, was a young fellow called Ambrose of Piacenza, who made the greatest fun in the world of what Bernard said last in praise of his wife, asking him, whether the emperor had given him this privilege, exclusive of the rest of mankind? Bernard, a little agitated, said, "Not the emperor, but God Almighty, who was something more powerful than the emperor, had bestowed this favour upon him." Ambrose replied, "I make not the least doubt, but that you think you speak truth: but in my opinion, you have not enough considered the nature of things; for if you had, I do not believe your understanding so mean as not to find many reasons to make you think more coolly of the matter. Wherefore, that you may not imagine that we, who have spoken so much at large concerning our wives, suppose them of a different make from yours, but that we have merely regard to the natural propensity of all, I shall beg leave to reason a little with you on this subject. I have always understood that man is the most noble of God's creatures, and that woman is in the next degree to him: now as man is allowed to be more perfect, he must consequently have more resolution and constancy. In like manner, women are always more wavering and fickle, as I could show by several reasons, which I shall omit at present. If, therefore, man, who is allowed to have

the most stability, cannot—I will not say resist a woman that should entreat him, but cannot even help desiring and doing all that lies in his power to get into the company of a woman that he likes, and this not once in a month, but a thousand times every day, what can you think a woman, naturally weak, can do against the entreaties, flatteries, gifts, and a thousand other means, which an artful lover knows how to use? Do you think she can resist? Affirm it as you will, I can never think you in earnest. You say your wife is flesh and blood, and therefore subject to the same desires as other women, and her strength to resist those desires must be the same: be she then ever so virtuous, it is possible for her to do like other women: and if it be possible, you should never have denied it in that positive manner, and maintained the contrary, as you have done."

"I am a merchant, and not a philosopher," Bernard replied, "and shall answer you as such; I tell you, therefore, that what you say may be the case of women of little understanding, and who have no sense of shame; but such as are wise have such anxious regard for their honour, that they become more firm than men, who are not so tender on that point; and such a one is my wife."

"Truly," said Ambrose, "if for every fault of this kind they were to have a horn spring out of their foreheads, to bear testimony against them, I believe few would be guilty: but so far from having a horn grow, if they be wise, there is nothing to make the least discovery: and as shame and loss of character happen only when things are made public, therefore what they can accomplish in secret they rarely fail to do: or, if they abstain, it is through their folly. Take this then for a rule—that woman only is chaste who has never been asked; or she who herself has asked and been refused. And though I am convinced of this by natural and just reasons, yet I should not speak as I do, if I had not tried the humours and affections of many different women. Let me also tell you, that if I was in company with your most virtuous wife, I should not doubt my obtaining the same favour from her that I have gained from many others."

Bernard was provoked at this, and said, "There is no end of disputing; you assert, and I assert, which is all nothing: but since you say they are so easily warped, and have such an opinion of your own power that way: to convince you of my wife's virtue, I will forfeit my head, if you ever bring her

to a compliance, upon condition that, if you should not prevail over her, you only lose a thousand florins of gold."

Ambrose replied, with a good deal of warmth, "Of what use will your life be to me, if I should win it? but if you have a mind to put the thing to the trial, stake five thousand florins, which are of less value than your life, against one thousand of mine; and as you fix no time, I will oblige myself to go to Genoa, and in less than three months from the day of my departure to gain my will of your wife, and to bring such tokens thereof back with me as you yourself shall confess to be just; provided you will give me your word, that you will neither come to Genoa in that time, nor write to her about the matter."

Bernard said he liked the wager; and though the other merchants endeavoured all they could to prevent it, as well knowing what mischief might ensue, yet the two merchants were so warm, that, in spite of all their friends could do, they immediately signed the articles to that purpose. Bernard, therefore, stayed behind, whilst Ambrose made the best of his way to Genoa. There he continued a day or two, informing himself, as cautiously as possible, of the name of the street where the lady lived, as also of her character, when he soon heard all that Bernard had related to be true, and a great deal more; which made him conclude that he had come thither on a very foolish errand: but meeting with a poor woman who frequented the house, to whom the lady was very kind, he wrought so far upon her, by means of a bribe, that he was carried in a chest, made according to his own directions, not only into the house, but even into the lady's bed-chamber, where it was to be left for some days, for the greater security, as if the good woman was going abroad.

When night came, and the lady, as he supposed, was asleep, he opened the chest with certain instruments which he had carried with him for that end, and went softly into the room, where a light was burning, by which he observed carefully the form and situation of the chamber, and also the pictures, and everything remarkable in it, which he endeavoured to keep in his memory. Coming then to the bedside, and seeing the lady and a little girl that was in bed with her, both fast asleep, he found her as beautiful as if she had been dressed; but yet he could perceive no sign to carry away concerning her, unless it was a mole upon her left breast; with which being pretty well satisfied, and not daring, from the lady's known character, to presume farther; after being

there the greatest part of the night, he took a purse, and also a gown, and a ring and girdle; all which he put into his chest, and went into it again, making it fast as before; and there he continued two nights, without the lady's perceiving anything of the matter. The third day the woman came for the chest, according to her appointment, and carried it back; when Ambrose satisfied her according to promise, and hastened away to Paris with these tokens before the limited time.

He then summoned the merchants together who were present when the wager was laid, declaring to Bernard that he had won; having brought the tokens which he had promised to produce. First, then, he described the chamber and the paintings, and showed those things, which he said he had received from herself. Bernard owned that the chamber was as he had described it; and he remembered, also, that the things which he had brought belonged to his wife; but he added, that the other might have had an account of the room, as well as procured the other things, from some of the servants; therefore, if he could say nothing more, this did not seem sufficient to entitle him to the wager. Then Ambrose replied, "Truly this ought to satisfy you; but since you would have me say something more, know then, that Madam Ginevra, your wife, has a mole upon her left breast." When Bernard heard this, he was struck to the very heart, and his countenance changed in such a manner, as to convince them, if he had not said another word, that Ambrose spoke truth; and after some time he replied: "Gentlemen, what Ambrose says is true; and, as I own myself to have lost, he may come when he pleases, and I will pay him."

The money, therefore, was paid the next day, and Bernard set out for Genoa, most cruelly incensed against his wife; and being come to a country-house of his, about twenty miles off, he sent a servant whom he could trust, with a couple of horses and a letter to her; wherein he acquainted her with his return, and that he would have her come away along with the servant, whom he had charged, at the same time, as soon as he came to a fit place, to put her to death, and repair to him. The servant delivered the letter to his mistress, who received the news with great joy; and the next morning she set forwards with him. As they travelled along, talking of divers things by the way, they came into a solitary vale surrounded with trees, which the servant thought a fit place for the execution of his master's orders; therefore, drawing a

knife out of his pocket, and taking the lady by the arm, he said, "Madam, commend your soul to God, for here you must die." She, in the utmost astonishment, begged for God's sake that, before he put her to death, he would tell her what she had done to offend him in that manner. "Madam," said the servant, "you have done me no harm; and as to your husband, I can say only this, that he ordered me to kill you by the way, without showing you the least mercy; threatening otherwise to hang me up. You know full well my obligations to him, and that I must not resist his commands; I am sorry for you, God knows, but I cannot help it." The lady wept, and said, "Alas! do not murder me, who have never injured you, for the sake of another person: God is my witness, who knoweth all things, that I never did anything to deserve this from my husband; but, setting that aside, you may, if you please, serve God, your master, and myself, in this manner; namely, do you take my clothes, leaving me only your hat and doublet, and carry them to my lord and yours, telling him that you have killed me; and I swear, by that life for which I shall be indebted to you, that I will go where neither he, you, nor any person in this country, shall ever hear more concerning me." The servant, who was loth to put her to death, was easily prevailed upon; and leaving her his coat and hat, and some money which she had about her, and entreating her not to make any stay, went straight to his master, telling him that he had obeyed his commands, and left the body to be devoured by wolves. After some time Bernard returned to Genoa, and the fact being discovered, he was much blamed for what he had done.

The lady being left alone, as soon as night came on, she disguised herself as well as she could, and went to a neighbouring village, where she procured what she wanted of an old woman, and she mended and cut the doublet shorter, and turned her shift into a pair of trowsers; and having cut her hair, and appearing in every respect like a common sailor, she went to the sea-side, where she met a Catalonian gentleman, named Senor Encararch, who being just come on shore to refresh himself at a spring of fresh water, she fell into discourse with him, and, agreeing to enter into his service, went on board, calling herself Sicurano da Finale. There she obtained better clothes, and she proved so expert and diligent a servant, that he was greatly pleased with her. Soon afterwards this gentleman sailed to Alexandria, carrying with him a number of falcons as a present to the sultan, who often

entertained him at his table; and taking particular notice of the behaviour of Sicurano, who waited always upon her master, he begged her of the gentleman much against his will; and in a little time she was in as great favour with the sultan as she had been with her former master.

Now at a certain time of the year there was to be a fair at Acre, which was under the dominion of the sultan, and where was a great resort both of Christian and Turkish merchants, for whose greater security the sultan used to send one of his ordinary officers with a band of soldiers. And the time now drawing near, he resolved to send Sicurano for that purpose, as being well skilled in the languages; and she arriving at Acre as captain of the guard for the merchants, discharged her duty with great care and diligence, conversing daily with Sicilian, Pisan, Genoese, Venetian, and other Italian merchants, whom she chiefly was acquainted with, because they were of her own country. As she was one day therefore in a shop belonging to some Venetian merchant, amongst some other toys, she cast her eyes upon a purse and girdle, which she soon knew to be her own; but without making any such discovery, she asked whom they belonged to, and whether they were to be sold? Now it happened that Ambrose was come thither with a great stock of goods, and hearing the captain of the guard make inquiry whom those things belonged to, he stepped forwards, and said, with a laugh, "Sir, they are mine, and not to be sold; but if you like them, they are at your service." Sicurano seeing him laugh, supposed it was at some action or behaviour of hers, and therefore, with a more settled countenance, she said, "I suppose you laugh to see me, a man professing arms, inquiring after such womanish toys."—"Sir," replied Ambrose, "I do not laugh at that; but I laugh only at the manner by which I obtained them." Sicurano then replied, "Good sir, if it be not too much trouble, tell me how that was." "Sir," quoth Ambrose, "a lady of Genoa, called Ginevra, wife to one Bernard Lomellin, gave them to me one night when I lay with her, and desired I would keep them for her sake. I laugh therefore, at Bernard's folly, who laid me five thousand florins to one thousand, that I could not obtain my will of her: which I did, and won my wager, whilst he, who deserved to have been punished for his brutality more than she, who did no more than what all women do, returned to Genoa, and by what I can find, had her put to death."

Sicurano had now found out the grounds of Bernard's dis-

pleasure; and as she perceived that this man had been the cause of it, she determined not to let him go unpunished: but seeming to be pleased with his story, she became more acquainted with him; and when the fair was ended, she took him with her to Alexandria, made him hire a shop, and lodged money in his hands, which turned to such account, that he was very willing to stay there. Sicurano, desirous of making her innocence appear to her husband, agreed with some Genoese merchants, under some pretence or other, to have him brought thither; and he being come in a poor and wretched plight, she had sent him privately to a friend's house to be taken care of, till it should be time to put her purpose in execution. Now Sicurano had made Ambrose tell the story before the sultan, who seemed pleased with it; but as soon as her husband was come, she determined to wait no longer; and taking a fit opportunity, she prevailed upon the sultan to send for Ambrose and Bernard both before him, and in the presence of Bernard, to make the other confess by force, if he would not own it otherwise, how the affair was, which he had so boasted of concerning Bernard's wife. Accordingly they were brought face to face, and the sultan, with a stern countenance, commanded Ambrose, before a number of people to speak the truth, namely, how he had won of Bernard the five thousand florins. Sicurano also, who was present, and in whom Ambrose put a good deal of confidence, declared with a great deal of anger in her looks, that he should be severely chastised, if he did not. Being terrified, therefore, on both sides, and in some measure compelled; expecting also to restore only the five thousand florins without any other punishment, he related the whole affair. Which being done, Sicurano, as minister to the sultan, turned to Bernard, and said, "What did you then do to your wife, on account of this lie?" He replied, "Being outrageous with the loss of my money and the shame to which I was exposed, for the injury I thought I had sustained from her, I ordered one of my servants to murder her, and, as he informs me, she was immediately devoured by wolves."

These things being related in the presence of the sultan, and many other witnesses, without his knowing Sicurano's purpose, she said: "My lord, you now see plainly what great reason the poor woman has to boast of her gallant and her husband; for the one deprives her of her good character with lies, and ruins her husband at the same time; whilst the other, showing greater regard for that person's falseness than to the

virtue of his wife (of which he might have been assured from long experience), has her murdered, and devoured by wolves. Besides, such is the respect that they both bear towards her, that she is now known to neither of them, though they have been long entertained by her. But that you may more perfectly understand what both have deserved, and if, at my request, you will punish the deceiver, and excuse the person who was deceived, she shall forthwith appear before you and them." The sultan, who was disposed to show favour to Sicurano in everything, agreed that the lady should appear; at which Bernard was much surprised, supposing she was dead; whilst Ambrose, foreseeing what was likely to happen, began to think of something worse than repayment of the money, not knowing whether he had most reason to fear or hope in consequence of her appearing there; and he waited her coming with the utmost consternation.

The sultan having thus given leave, Sicurano threw herself at his feet, and, laying aside her manly voice and demeanour, she said, "My lord, I am the miserable and unfortunate Ginevra, who, for the space of six years have wandered over the world in man's disguise, being most basely aspersed by that villain Ambrose, and given up to a servant by that most cruel and unjust man, to be murdered and devoured by wolves." And showing her breast, she made it appear that she was the same woman. Turning then to Ambrose, she resolutely demanded, when it was that he had lain with her, as he had formerly vaunted? But he knowing her again, was so struck with shame, that he could not utter a word. The sultan, who had all along taken her for a man, was so surprised at what he heard and saw, that it appeared to him more like a dream than truth; but upon recollecting himself, and seeing everything plainly made out, he most highly commended the life, constancy, and behaviour of Ginevra, heretofore called Sicurano; and ordering proper apparel and attendants for her, he pardoned Bernard, at her request, and spared him the death he had justly merited; while he, now knowing her again, knelt down and begged pardon, which she readily granted, however unworthy he was of it, and embraced him as her husband. The sultan then ordered Ambrose to be fastened to a stake, in the most eminent part of the city, and his naked body smeared over with honey, and that he should hang there till he should drop in pieces; which sentence was soon put in execution. He next gave charge that all the culprit's substance should be

given to Ginevra, which did not amount to less than ten thousand double ducats: and making a most sumptuous feast, in honour of Bernard, as her husband, and Ginevra, as a most worthy lady, he presented her with plate and money to the amount of ten thousand ducats more; and providing a ship for them, when the feast was over, he gave them leave to depart for Genoa, which they did with great joy, and were received with the utmost respect, especially Ginevra, who was thought to be dead; and the same esteem was continued towards her as long as she lived. As for Ambrose, he was not only destroyed the very day he was impaled, by wasps and hornets, with which the country abounds, but he was eaten to the very bones, which being bound together by the sinews, remained hanging there for some time, as a testimony of his villany. And thus it is, that the deceiver lies at the mercy of the deceived.

The origin of this tale is unknown. It has in part been closely followed by Shakespeare in his 'Cymbeline.']

NOVEL X.

Paganino de Monaco carries away the wife of Signior Ricciardo di Chinzica, who, understanding where she was, goes thither, and growing acquainted with Paganino, he demands her back, which the other consents to, provided she is willing: she refuses to return; and upon Ricciardo's death becomes the wife of Paganino.

All the company commended the queen's story, and especially Dioneo, who was the only person left to speak for that day; and having said much in praise of it, he began to this effect:—Ladies, part of the queen's novel has made me change my intention with regard to what I meant to relate: what I allude to is the brutishness of Bernard (though it turned out well for him), and of all such as himself, who think as he did; namely, that whilst they are travelling about from place to place, and diverting themselves sometimes with one lady and sometimes with another, they conclude that their wives are sitting with their hands before them all the while, as if we did not know to the contrary. I shall therefore show you how great the folly is of all such people, and of those especially, who, supposing themselves to be more powerful than nature hath really formed them, think to cover all by fabulous demonstrations, and endeavour to

make other persons' constitutions and tempers square with their own, however contrary it may be to their natural bent and inclination.

There once lived at Pisa, a certain judge, endowed with greater genius of mind than bodily ability, whose name was Signior Ricciardo di Chinzica. Being possessed with a notion that it would cost him no greater efforts to content a wife than to perform his judicial duties, he determined, as he was very rich, to have a wife who should be very young and very handsome; two things which he ought to have shunned, had he known how to advise himself as well as he did other people. He had his wish, however, for Signior Lotto Gualandi bestowed on him his daughter Bartolomea, one of the briskest and most beautiful ladies in all Pisa, though there are few among them all that are not as yellow as a kite's foot. The worthy judge brought his bride home in great state, and gave a sumptuous wedding entertainment, but only summed up once in the course of the night, and even then was near breaking down in his harangue; and after all he was obliged to recruit his exhausted spirits with malmsey and cordial confections before he could return to his ordinary avocations. Being a better judge now of his own strength, he began to teach his wife a calendar, formerly printed at Ravenna, for the use of children learning to read. With that document in his hand, he showed her that there was scarcely a day in the year but what was dedicated to some saint or other, and some days had more saints than one: in reverence to whom, as he proved by many reasons, a man and his wife ought to keep asunder at those times. To these he added the fast days, the four terms, the vigils of the Apostles, and a thousand other saints, with Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays, and all Lent; also certain seasons of the moon, and many other exceptions; and in short he seemed to think it fit that a *dies non* should be as frequent an occurrence in the conjugal bed as in the courts of law. In this manner he lived with his lady, to her great discontent, scarcely conversing with her once a month, and keeping a strict watch over her, for fear some other person should teach her what belonged to working-days, as he had done with respect to holidays.

In the meantime it happened that, the season growing extremely hot, Messer Ricciardo went for recreation to spend a few days at one of his country-seats, near Monte Nero, taking his lady with him; and, to make it more agreeable

to her, they went out fishing together one day, he and the fishermen being in one boat, and she in another, along with some ladies, who went to see the sport. Thinking of nothing but their diversion, they had insensibly drifted out many miles to sea, without perceiving it, when on a sudden they were surprised, in the midst of their sport by a galliot belonging to one Paganino da Monaco, a famous pirate of those days. They tried hard to escape, but in spite of all their efforts, the pirate captured the boat which had the women on board, and struck by the beauty of the judge's wife, he carried her into his own ship in sight of her husband, who had now reached the shore; and, without meddling with anything else, sailed directly away. How sorrowful Ricciardo was at seeing this you may easily imagine, he who was jealous of the very air itself. Loud and long were the complaints he made, both at Pisa and elsewhere, of the villany of these corsairs; but all in vain, for he knew not who it was that had taken his wife, or whither she was carried.

As for Paganino, he was delighted to have made prize of a lady so young and so handsome; and, being without a wife, he resolved to keep her in lieu of one. He began by soothing her alarm with all sorts of tender expressions, and as these had not all the effect he desired, when night was come he proceeded to administer more practical consolation; for he had lost his almanac, and had clean forgotten all distinction between workdays and holidays. His charitable efforts were so successful, that long before the lady reached Monaco, the judge and his laws were quite gone out of her head, and she lived with all the comfort in the world with Paganino, who, besides the consolation he bestowed on her by night and by day, treated her with the respect and consideration due to a wife.

After some time, it came to Messer Ricciardo's ears what had become of his wife, and he set off, with the utmost impatience, to fetch her back, supposing no other person so proper for that business as himself, and fully resolved to give any sum of money for her ransom. Arrived at Monaco, he saw her, and she him; and that night she told Paganino of it, informing him what she meant to do. The next morning Messer Ricciardo meeting with Paganino, they soon became acquainted together; the pirate pretending all the time to know nothing of him, but waiting to see what he meant to do. As soon as a fit opportunity offered, Messer Ricciardo

began to set forth the occasion of his coming thither, and, in as handsome a manner as he could, to desire that the other would take what ransom he thought fit, and restore him his wife. Paganino answered very courteously—"Sir, you are heartily welcome; but the case, in short, is this: I have a young woman in the house with me, though whether she is your wife, or any other person's, I cannot tell; for I neither knew you nor her before she lived with me. If you are her husband, as you say, I will bring you to her, since you seem to be a very civil gentleman, and she must certainly know you. If she agrees with your story, and is willing you should take her away, your behaviour has been such, that I shall desire no other recompense than what you are pleased to give me. But if it should prove otherwise, I must tell you, that you offer me great wrong to attempt to take her from me: for I am a young man, and know what to do with a wife as well as another person, especially such an one as she, who is the most agreeable woman I ever saw." "Most certainly, sir, she is my wife," Messer Ricciardo replied, "and, if you please to take me to where she is, you will soon be convinced of it, for she will immediately throw her arms about my neck: therefore I desire it may be as you have proposed."—"Let us go then," quoth Paganino.

When they were come into the house, and sat down together in the hall, Paganino ordered the lady to be called, and she being dressed, and ready for that purpose, came to them, but took no more notice of Messer Ricciardo, than she would have done of any other stranger who should come into the house with Paganino. The judge, who had expected to be received by her with the utmost joy, was much surprised at this, and thought to himself, "Surely the grief I have sustained for the loss of her, has so changed my looks, that she does not know me again." He therefore said to her, "My love, it has cost me dear to take you fishing, for I was never so grieved in my whole life, as since I lost you: and yet you seem not to know me; so cruelly are you silent. Do not you see that I am your Ricciardo, come to pay whatever ransom the gentleman may demand, in whose house we are now together, to have you back with me? And he is so kind as to offer to restore you at what price I shall fix myself."—"Do you speak to me, sir?" said the lady, turning to him with a smile. "Take care you do not mistake my person, for I do not remember ever in my whole life to have seen you before." "Do you take care what you say," he replied, "look well at

me; if you will recollect yourself, you may plainly see that I am your husband Ricciardo di Chinzica." The lady made answer, "You will excuse me, sir, it is not so modest as you may suppose, to gaze much upon you; but I have looked enough to know, that I never saw you in my whole life till now." Ricciardo supposed that she did this only through fear of Paganino, and that she was unwilling to confess before him; for which reason he desired, as a favour, to talk alone with her in the chamber. Paganino consented on condition that he would not offer to kiss her against her will; and bade the lady to go up stairs with Messer Ricciardo, hear what he had to say, and answer him as she thought proper.

She complied, and when they were seated together, the judge again addressed her, "Alas! my life, my soul, sweet object of all my wishes!" he exclaimed, "do you not know your Ricciardo, who loves you more than himself? How can this be? Am I so altered, my jewel? Look upon me a little." She began to laugh, and without letting him proceed farther, said, "I am not so forgetful, you must be aware, as not to know that you are Ricciardo di Chinzica, my husband; but during the time I was with you, it very ill appeared that you had any knowledge of me: for were you really as wise as you would be thought, you must have perceived that I was young and lively, and consequently you ought to have bethought you that young wives have need of something else besides food and raiment, though modesty forbids them to mention it. If you were fonder of the study of the laws than of a wife, you ought never to have married: though, in truth, you seem rather a proclaimer of feasts and fasts, than a judge; yet, let me tell you, should you allow your labourers in the field as many holidays as you take yourself at home, you would never reap one grain of corn. Heaven, in its merciful consideration for my youth, has made me fall in with a person whom I like very well, who keeps none of your Fridays and Saturdays, nor your feasts, vigils, and long Lents· him, therefore, I intend to abide with while my youth continues, and let the fasting part alone till I grow old. Therefore the sooner you go about your business, in God's name, the better, and keep as many fast days without me as you please."

The poor judge was wofully discomfitted by this speech, and said, after she had done speaking, "My dear love, what words are these that I hear from you? Have you no regard for your parents' honour, and your own? Had you rather

abide here in a mortal sin, as this man's harlot, than at Pisa as my wife? He will soon grow weary of you, and turn you off with great contempt; but I shall always love you, and when I die, leave you mistress of my house. Can an inordinate and shameful appetite make you careless of your honour, and of me, who love you more than my own life? Do not say so, my dearest! Go along with me: now I know what the grievance is, I will strive to do better. My joy! my treasure! change your mind and depart with me, for I have never known a happy day since you were taken from me."

"Sir," she replied, "I desire nobody to be careful of my honour but myself: my parents should have had regard to that when they made me your wife; and if they were careless of me at that time, why should I now be mindful of them? And as for my living in a mortal sin, never trouble your head about that: I am here considered as Paganino's wife, but at Pisa I was more like your baggage; there was so much to do between us with respect to the times of the moon, the quadratures and conjunctions of the planets; whereas here we mind no such thing. Paganino cuddles me all night in his arms, and hugs, and kisses, and bites me, and the Lord knows what besides. But you say you will strive to do better; it is impossible, our complexions are so widely different. Go home, therefore, and try to keep yourself alive, for that is as much as you are able to do: and as for his discarding me, should that ever happen (which at present seems far from his thoughts), I will never return to you, for, if you were squeezed in a press, one could not get a spoonful of juice out of your dry body. No, I have had vexation enough with you already, and for comfort I would look elsewhere. In the meantime, I tell you once more, that here we have no feasts and fasts, and here I intend to stay; therefore, either go directly about your business, or I will call out that you design to force me."

The judge, now utterly confounded, and aware at last of his folly in marrying so young a person, left the room, and had some talk with Paganio, which came to nothing. In the end, therefore, he was forced to leave his wife, and he returned to Pisa, where he ran raving about the streets, making no answer to any friend that accosted him, except that his strumpet would keep no holidays; and soon afterwards he died. The news came no sooner to the ears of Paganino, than he married the widow, knowing the love she had for

him; and they lived happily together, banishing all fasts, Lents, and such things from their house. Wherefore, it seems plain to me, my dear ladies, that Bernard quite mistook the case in his dispute with Ambrose.

This story made them laugh till their sides ached, and all agreed that Dioneo was in the right, and that Bernard was an ass. And now the queen, seeing that her reign was at an end, took the garland from her own head, and put it upon Neifile's, saying pleasantly to her, "To you, dear friend, belongs henceforth the government of this little people." Neifile, blushing at the favour done her, looked like a rose in the dewy dawn of an April day, her eyes, though a little downcast, yet sparkling like the morning star. After the murmur of the applauding company was a little abated, and she had resumed her courage, she spoke to this effect: "As I am now your queen, I shall keep to the method which has been hitherto observed, and which you have approved of by your concurrence, and will tell you in a few words what I would farther have done. You all know that to-morrow will be Friday and the next Saturday, both of which are inconvenient days, on account of laying in provisions. Moreover, Friday is a day to be reverenced, on account of our Saviour's passion: therefore I hold it fit that we rather pray that day, than attend to novels. As for Saturday, it is usual to make everything clean on that day: many people also observe it as a fast, in honour of the holy Virgin, as well as the ensuing sabbath, on which day no work may be done. Wherefore, as we cannot go on exactly in the same manner as we first began, I hold it best to suspend the relation of any more novels: and as we shall then have been here four days, it will be convenient to go to another place, which I have already fixed upon, and where I have made provision for you, if we would avoid admitting some new guests, who might probably come to see us. When we shall be there assembled, let our next argument still be the mutability of fortune, as exemplified in the adventures of such persons as have acquired, by their diligence, something greatly wanted by them, or else recovered what they had lost. Let every one think of something to say upon this subject, which may be useful, or at least entertaining; saving always his privilege to Dioneo."

They all commended what the queen had ordered, and agreed it should be done: she afterwards called the master

of the household, to give directions for that night's entertainment, and for what else was necessary during her royalty: and then she gave the company leave to go wherever they pleased. They took a walk, therefore, into the garden, where they amused themselves till supper-time: and having supped with great cheerfulness and mirth, and being risen from table, Emilia began a dance, by the queen's command; whilst the following song was sung by Pampinea, the rest joining in a chorus.

SONG.

Of all I want or wish possest,
Which of us here should sing but I,
Come, gentle Cupid, heavenly guest,
The constant source of all my joy!

And teach my late desponding lyre
No more in plaintive notes to mourn,
But mirth and am'rous joy inspire,
Whilst in your pleasing flames I burn.

You first before my eyes have plac'd
An ardent lover, gay and young;
With every manly virtue grac'd,
And soft persuasion on his tongue.

But what crowns all my hope is this,
Our hearts and wishes fondly join;
That mutual and the same our bliss,
His love sincere, and fix'd as mine.

Cupid, 'tis to your gift I owe
That in this world I'm amply blest;
May Heav'n, in whom I trust, bestow
In that to come, eternal rest!

They sang many more songs also, and led up several more dances, playing divers kinds of music; but the queen judging that it was now time to go to bed, they went with a light before them to their respective chambers, bestowing the two following days in the manner, which she had before prescribed to them; and waiting with impatience for Sunday.

[La Fontaine's 'Calendrier des Vieillards' is an imitation of this story. The concluding incident corresponds with one in the story of 'D'un Tailleur et de sa Femme,' in the 'Contes Turcs.']

THE THIRD DAY.

THE rising sun had now changed the complexion of the morning from scarlet to yellow, when the queen rose on Monday, and had all her company called up. The master of the household had long before sent many things that were necessary, as also people to do whatever was required: and seeing the queen now upon the march, he had everything else packed up, and removed bag and baggage; the ladies and gentlemen following behind. The queen marched on with an easy pace, attended by her ladies and the three gentlemen, and conducted by the music of nightingales and other tuneful birds, along a path not much frequented, but enamelled with various flowers, which began to open their bosoms to the ascending sun; and, directing her course full west, chatting merrily with her company all the way, in a little more than two miles she brought them to a most beautiful palace, seated upon an eminence in the middle of a large plain. When they had entered, and had seen the great hall and the chambers, most elegantly fitted up, and furnished with everything that was proper, they greatly extolled it, judging its lord to be truly a magnificent person. Going afterwards below stairs, and observing the spacious and pleasant court, the cellars stored with the richest wines, and delicate springs of water everywhere running, they commended it yet more. Thence they went to rest themselves in an open gallery (which overlooked the court) set out with all the flowers of the season; whither the master of the household brought wine and sweetmeats for their refreshment.

They were now shown into the garden, which was on one side of the palace, and walled round about. It seemed so full of beauties at their first entrance, that they were the more attentive in viewing every part. All round and through the midst of it were broad straight walks flanked with vines, which seemed to promise a plenteous vintage; and being all in blossom, they gave so delicious a scent, joined with other flowers then blowing in the garden, that they thought themselves amongst the spiceries of the east. The sides of these walks were closed with white and red roses and jessamine, in such a manner as to exclude the morning and even the mid-day sun. What was the variety of plants, and how elegantly disposed, it would be needless to mention, since there

was nothing belonging to our climate which was not there in great abundance. In the middle of this garden, what seemed more delightful than anything else, was a plot of ground like a meadow; the grass of a deep green, spangled with a thousand different flowers, and set round with orange and cedar trees, whose branches were stored with ripe fruit and blossoms, at the same time affording a most pleasing object to the eye, as well as a grateful odour to the smell. In the centre of this meadow was a fountain of white marble, beautifully carved; and (whether by a natural or artificial spring I know not) from a figure standing on a column in the midst of the fountain, a jet of water spouted up, which made a most agreeable sound in its fall: the water which came thence ran through the meadow by a secret passage; when, being received into canals, it appeared again, and was carried to every part of the garden, uniting in one stream at its going out, and falling with such force into the plain, as to turn two mills before it got thither. The sight of this garden, its form and contrivance, with the fountains and the spring proceeding from it, pleased the gentlemen and ladies so much, that they spared not to say that if there was a paradise on earth, it could be in no other form, nor was it possible to add any thing to it. While they were walking about, therefore, diverting themselves with weaving chaplets of flowers, and listening to the various melody of the birds, who seemed to vie with each other, a new beauty presented itself to them, which they had before taken no notice of; they perceived the garden to be full of a hundred different creatures: in one place they saw rabbits issuing forth; from another quarter they saw hares: here were goats lying down, and there were deer grazing, with many others passing backwards and forwards at their pleasure, as though they were tame. When their senses had sufficiently feasted on these several beauties, the table was spread by the side of the fountain, and, after half a dozen songs and some dances, they sat down to eat, being served in a sumptuous manner with everything that was dainty and elegant; and when they had done feasting, they began again to sing and dance, till the queen commanded them to give over, and permitted such as were so disposed to take their ease. Accordingly some departed; and others, charmed with the pleasantness of the place, stayed to read or play at chess. At nine they arose, and went into the meadow at the fountain-side, and being seated there as usual, they waited for the time when they should begin their novels

upon the subject which the queen had proposed. The first who was ordered to speak was Filostrato, who thus addressed them:—

NOVEL I.

Masetto da Lamporecchio, pretending to be dumb, is taken in to be gardener to a convent of nuns: what happens in consequence.

THERE are many people, fair ladies, so simple as to imagine, that, after a young lady has put on the white veil, and the black hood, she ceases to have the feelings and passions of a woman, as if by becoming a nun she was converted into stone. If these people hear anything contrary to this opinion, they are as much offended as though some very heinous and unnatural crime was committed; never thinking of themselves, who cannot be satisfied, although they have the liberty of doing as they will; nor considering the prevalency of leisure and solitude. In like manner, there are others who think that the spade and pick-axe, with hard labour and gross feeding, quench all lustful appetites, depriving the people of all sense and understanding; but how much they are both mistaken, I shall, at the queen's command, now show you, keeping close to the subject which she has given us.

There was formerly in our neighbourhood (and may be still) a convent of nuns, famous for their sanctity. In this convent (which shall be nameless, because I would not lessen the characters of its pious inmates), there were only eight young ladies, with an abbess; there was also a gardener to look after their fine garden, who, not being satisfied with his salary, made up his accounts with their steward, and returned to Lamporecchio, whence he came. Amongst many others who came to welcome him home, was a fine strapping young fellow named Masetto, who inquired of him where he had been to all that time? The honest man (whose name was Nuto) told him. The other inquired again in what capacity he served the convent? "I had care of the garden," he replied, "and used to go to the wood for faggots; I drew water for them also, with such-like services; but my wages were so small that they would scarcely find me shoes; and besides they are all so young and giddy, that I could do nothing to please them; for when I have been in the garden, one would cry do this, and another do that, and another would take

the spade out of my hand, and tell me 'that thing is in a wrong place,' and they have given me so much trouble altogether, that I have left them. The steward desired, at my departure, if I met with a proper person, to send him; but hang me if I do any such thing."

When Massetto heard this, he had a great desire to get among those nuns, guessing from what Nuto had said, that he might be able to gain his ends. But lest his purpose should be defeated, if he let the other into the secret, he said to him, "You did very right to come away: what has a man to do among so many women? He might as well be with as many devils: for it is not once in ten times they know what they would be at." After they had done talking together, Masetto began to contrive what method he should take to get introduced; and being assured that he could do all the work that Nuto had mentioned, he had no fears upon that account: all the danger seemed rather to be in his youth and person: whether he might not be rejected. After much reflection, he reasoned thus with himself: "I live far enough off and nobody knows me: suppose I feign myself dumb, they will certainly receive me then."

Resolved on this, without saying a word to any one about where he was going, he took an axe on his shoulder, and went like a poor man to the convent; and finding the steward in the court-yard, he made signs like a dumb person for a little bread, and that he would cleave wood if they had any occasion. The steward gave him something to eat, and afterwards shewed him divers pieces of wood, which Nuto was not able to rend, but which Masetto, in a little time (being very strong), split all to pieces. The steward, having occasion to go to the wood, took him with him; where he made him fell several trees, load the ass with them, and drive it home before him: this Masetto did very well; and the steward wanting him for other things, he continued there for several days, till at length the abbess saw him, and asked the steward what the man did there? "Madam," he replied, "this is a poor man, deaf and dumb, who came the other day to ask charity, which I gave him, and he has done many things for us since: I believe, if he knows anything of gardening and could be prevailed upon to stay, that he might be of good service; for we want such a person, and he is strong, and will do what work we please: besides, there will be no fear of his seducing any of the young ladies."—"Why, truly," quoth the abbess, "you say right: see if he knows how to

work, and if so, try to keep him; make much of him, give him a pair of shoes, and an old coat, and let him have his fill of victuals." This the steward promised to do. Masetto, who was at no great distance, but seemed busy in sweeping the court, heard all this, and said merrily to himself, "Yes, if you let me stay here, I'll do your business as it never was done before." The steward, who was aware that he knew how to work, now inquired of him by signs whether he was willing to stay: and Masetto having made signs that he was, the steward took him into the garden, shewed him what he wished to have done, and left him there.

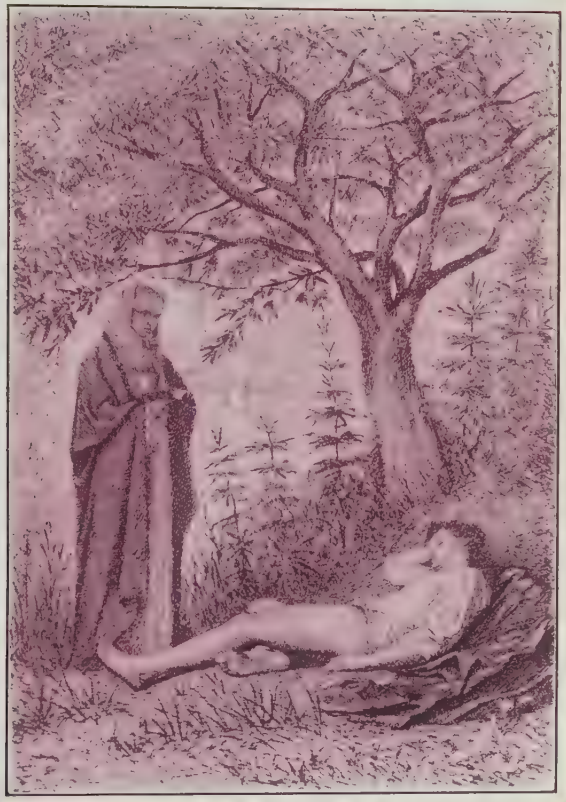
Now the nuns used to come every day to tease and laugh at the deaf and dumb gardener, and would say the naughtiest words in the world before him, imagining that he did not hear them: whilst the abbess took no notice of all this, thinking perhaps that as the man could not wag his tongue, he was equally harmless in other respects. One day when he had lain down to rest himself, two nuns, who were walking in the garden, came to the place where he pretended to be asleep: and as they stood looking at him, one, who was a little more forward than the other said, "Could I be assured of your secrecy, I would tell you of a thought I have often had in my head, which might be of service to yourself." "You may speak safely," said the other, "for I will never disclose it." Then said the first nun: "We are kept here in strict confinement, and not a man suffered to come near us, but our steward, who is old, and this dumb man. Now I have many and many a time heard from ladies who have come to see us, that all the other delights in the world are nothing to what a woman enjoys in a man's arms. I have often therefore had it in my mind to try the experiment with this dumb fellow, since no other is to be had; besides he is the fittest in the world for our purpose, being such an idiot, that he cannot expose us if he would; what is your opinion?—"Alas!" quoth the other, "what is that you say? Do not you know that we have promised our virginity to God?" "Oh! but sister," she replied, "how many things do we promise every day, which we never perform? If we have promised, there will be others found that shall be more punctual."—"But, if we should be with child, what would become of us then?"—"You think of the worst before it happens: it will be time enough to talk of that when it comes: there are a thousand ways of managing in such a case, that nobody will ever be the wiser unless we ourselves

make the discovery."—"Well, then," said the second nun, who was even more curious than her friend to know what sort of an animal a man might be; "how shall we contrive this matter?"—"You see," replied the other, "it is about midday, and I believe our sisters are all asleep; let us look round the garden, and if nobody be in it, what have we to do, but for one of us to lead him into yonder arbour, whilst the other keeps watch. He is such a fool that we can do what we like with him."

Masetto heard all this, and was quite ready to gratify the ladies, but waited until one of them should come and rouse him from his pretended sleep. The two nuns having assured themselves that nobody could see them, she who had been the first to move in the affair went and shook the gardener. He got up; the nun playfully took him by the hand, and led him, grinning and laughing like an idiot, to the arbour, where without giving her much trouble to explain her wishes he did what she wanted. Her curiosity having been satisfied, she made way for her companion, to whom Masetto, fool as he seemed, behaved equally well. Before they left him, each of them repeated the experiment once more, and they agreed in declaring that the result surpassed all that they could have imagined. After this it may easily be guessed how frequent were their visits to the arbour, and how punctually they availed themselves of the fitting hours to take their diversion with the good natured mute.

It chanced, however, one day that their proceedings were observed by one of the sisterhood, who immediately brought two others to witness them. At first the trio were for informing the lady abbess, but afterwards they changed their minds, entered into an arrangement with the detected pair, and became jointly interested with them in Masetto's services. There now remained but three nuns who were not privy to the secret; but in course of time they too came in various ways to share in it with the rest.

Finally the Abbess, who as yet had no notion of these doings, was taking a walk all alone in the garden one very sultry day, and found Masetto stripped to his shirt and asleep on the broad of his back, under an almond tree, having, it seems, not much to do that day, because he had been hard at work all the night before. Just then the wind fluttered the loose end of his single garment, and the Abbess saw what immediately gave her a fit of the complaint then prevalent in the convent. Waking up Masetto she took him to her



chamber, where she kept him close for some days, to the great mortification of the nuns, who complained loudly that the gardener did not come to his daily labour. She let him go at last, but often had him back again, and altogether engrossed more than her fair share of his attendance. Masetto began to find it no easy task to please so many mistresses, and was strongly of opinion that things would come to a bad pass with him if he continued dumb much longer. One night then, when he was with the abbess, his tongue was suddenly untied, and said he, "I have often heard say, madam, that one cock can do very well for ten hens, but that ten men can hardly with their best endeavours satisfy one woman, whereas I have to serve nine. I can't stand it any longer. I'm fairly worn out with what I have done already; so please either to let me go my way in God's name, or put this matter to rights somehow."

The abbess was astounded to hear him speak. "Why, how is this?" she said, "I thought you were dumb."—"So I was, madam, but not by nature. I had a long disorder which deprived me of my speech; and it was only this very night, thanks be to God, that I felt it come back to me." The abbess believed this tale, or feigned to do so, and asked him what he meant by saying that he had nine women to satisfy. Masetto explained the whole case to her; and she, like a discreet abbess, instead of sending him away, resolved to come to an understanding with her nuns, and devise with them how they might keep such a good gardener without incurring any scandal. A full and unreserved explanation soon took place between all parties, and the old steward happening to die very opportunely, Masetto was, with his own consent, unanimously chosen to fill the vacant place, and his duties were so apportioned that he could discharge them without inordinate fatigue. At the same time the people of the neighbourhood were made to believe that through the prayers of the sisterhood, and through the merits of the saint to whom the convent was dedicated, the man who had been so long dumb had been recovered his speech. Under the new steward's management the convent became a little nursery for the propagation of the monastic order, but everything was so quietly done that there never was any talk about it until after the death of the abbess, when Masetto, being now in years and wealthy, was desirous of returning home.

His desire was readily complied with: and thus, taking no

care for his children, but bequeathing them to the place where they were bred and born, he returned a wealthy man to his native place, which he had quitted with nothing but an axe over his shoulder, having had the wit to employ the season of his youth to good purpose.

[Boccaccio took this story from the 'Cento Novelle Antiche,' but substituted an abbess and her nuns for a countess and her *camerarie*. He in his turn has been followed, with some slight modifications, by La Fontaine, in his 'Mazet de Lamporechio.']

NOVEL II.

An equerry belonging to King Agilulf lay with his queen; of which the king making a secret discovery, set a mark upon him, by shearing the hair off his head; upon which, he who was so shorn, cut that of his fellow-servants in like manner, and so escaped further punishment.

FILOSTRATO having concluded his novel, which made the ladies sometimes blush and sometimes smile, the queen ordered Pampinea to follow; and she began pleasantly in this manner:—There are some people so indiscreet as to manifest that they know what they had better be unacquainted with, and who think that by bringing to light other people's offences, they lessen their own shame; whereas they make that all the greater. This I shall show to be true, by its contrary; setting forth the craft which a certain fellow (of no more account than Masetto) made use of to outwit a very wise and worthy prince.

Agilulf, king of Lombardy, fixed the seat of his kingdom, as his predecessors had done, at Pavia; having taken to wife Teudelinga, the widow of Vetari, his predecessor; a beautiful and most virtuous lady, but unhappy in having a lover. The affairs of the kingdom being now in a prosperous way, by the good management of King Agilulf, it happened that one of the queen's equerries fell immoderately in love with her. Though a man of the lowest extraction, he was in other respects far above the station in which he was placed; comely and graceful, and in person not unlike the king himself. His low rank did not prevent his having sense enough to see the inconvenience with which this passion might be attended; therefore he was so wise as to make discovery of it to no one; not even so much as by his looks to the queen herself. But though he lived without the least hopes of

ever attaining his desire, yet he could not help glorying in having fixed his affections so high: and being entirely captivated, he took more than ordinary care (far beyond the rest of his fellow-servants) to do everything that he thought would please her. Whence it happened that if the queen had a mind to ride out at any time, she oftener rode the horse that he had the care of than any other; which he esteemed a singular favour, never stirring from the stirrup; and could he but touch her clothes, he was then the happiest man in the world. But as we often see that love is most violent where there is the least probability of success, so it happened to this groom; for his passion was such, he being without the least hope whatever, that he often resolved, as he was unable to disclose it, to die. Considering in what manner he should quit the world, he resolved at length that it should be so as to convince her that it was for her sake, and at the same time so as to enable him to try his fortune, if it were possible to obtain his desire in whole or part. He had no thought of speaking, or even writing to the queen (for he knew both were to no purpose), but chose rather to attempt her bed by stratagem: and the only feasible stratagem to that end was in some way or other to personate the king, and so get admittance into her chamber.

In order then to see how dressed and in what manner his majesty used to go to the queen, he hid himself often in the night in a great room in the palace, that was between the king's apartment and that of the queen; and one night he saw the king come out of his chamber, wrapped in a large mantle, with a lighted torch in one hand, and a wand in the other, and go to the queen's bed-room, where without speaking a word, he knocked two or three times at the door with his wand, and it was immediately opened, and the torch taken out of his hand. The groom having observed all this, and having seen the king return in like manner, determined to do the same. Accordingly, he procured such a mantle as the king's, with a torch and wand, and having first washed himself very clean, that the smell of the stables might not be offensive to the queen, or make her discover the trick, he hid himself as usual till every one was asleep, which he thought a fit time either to succeed in his desires, or to bring upon himself, by a most daring deed, that death he had long wished for. He struck a light, therefore; he kindled his torch, and folding himself well in the mantle, went to the door, and rapped twice with his stick. The door was imme-

diately opened by a damsel half asleep, who took the light out of his hand, and set it in a corner of the room, while he stripped off his mantle, and got into the queen's bed. There he had the full gratification of his wishes, without a word being spoken on either side (for he knew the king's temper at certain times, and especially when he was disturbed, was such, that he would neither speak himself, nor be spoken to); and having stayed as long as he thought it was safe to stay, he took his mantle and torch, and stole softly to his own bed.

He had scarcely got into it before the king came to the queen's chamber, at which she was much surprised, and made bold to say to him, "My lord, what is the meaning of your returning so quickly? It is but this moment that you left me, and then you stayed longer than usual." The king, on hearing this, concluded that she had been imposed upon by somebody or other, who had assumed his person and manner: but, like a wise man, when he found that she was entirely ignorant of it, as well as every one else, he resolved that she should continue so: not like a great many simple people, who would have been apt to say, "I never was with you to-night before: who was it that was here? How did he come? In what manner did he go away?" All which must have given the lady great uneasiness, and the thing would have been in every one's mouth: whereas, by his discreet silence, he avoided both the one and the other. Seeming then more at ease in his looks and talk, than he was really in his mind, he said to her, "And is my coming again to you so soon disagreeable? however, I will leave you for to-night."

Highly incensed against the villain, who had dared to do him that injury, he now left the room, resolving to find him out, if it were possible; for he concluded he must be in the house, as there seemed no way for him to have got out. Taking a small light, therefore, in a lantern, he went into a long chamber over the stables, where all his domestics lay in different beds: and supposing, whoever he was, that he should find a difference in the beating of his heart and pulse, he began to examine them all from one end to the other. They were every one asleep, except that person who had been with the queen; and he seeing the king come into the room, and guessing the reason, thought it best to counterfeit sleep, and see what he meant to do. His majesty had now laid his hand upon many of them, without finding cause to suspect any one, till coming to that person, he immediately said to himself, "This is the man." Being desirous that nobody

should know anything of his design, he for the present did nothing more than just cut off, with a pair of scissors he had brought with him, a part of the man's hair, which they wore very long at that time, in order to know him again the next morning; and having done this, he returned directly to his chamber. The man was wise enough to know what was the intent of this; therefore, without delay, he took a pair of scissors which they used for their horses, and clipping all the people's hair above their ears in like manner, went to bed again, without being perceived by any one.

In the morning the king rose, and ordered, before the palace gates were opened, that all his domestics should come before him, which accordingly they did, standing with their heads uncovered; when he began to inspect them one after another, in order to find out the person whom he had marked; and perceiving that many of them had their hair cut alike, he began to wonder, and said to himself, "This fellow, though he be of low condition, is of no common understanding." Therefore, seeing that he could in no way find out the person, without making a great stir and noise; and unwilling also to incur a shame of that sort, for the sake of a little revenge, he thought it best to let the person know, by a word or two, that he was observed, and to admonish him for the future. So turning to them all, he said, "Whoever he is, let him do so no more; and all of you go about your business." Another person would have put them to the rack, to find out what would be much better concealed, and any revenge for which would, instead of lessening, have enhanced the disgrace, and brought dishonour upon the lady. The domestics all wondered at the king's words, and asked one another what could be the meaning of them: but nobody was wise enough to understand them, except the man aimed at; who kept his knowledge to himself as long as the king lived, never daring to run the like risk any more.

[In the 40th chapter of the 'Gesta Romanorum,' said to be from Macrobius, a wife's infidelity is discovered by feeling her pulse in conversation; but a story much nearer to that of Boccaccio occurs in Heber's French metrical romance of 'the Seven Sages,' though, according to Dunlop, it is not in the original Syntipas. The tale, however, has been taken immediately from the 98th of the 'Cento Novelle Antiche,' and it has been imitated in turn in the 'Palfrenier' of La Fontaine. Giannone, in his 'History of Naples,' has censured, not without some reason, the impertinence of Boccaccio in applying this story, without right, truth, or pretence, to the pious Queen Theudelinda.]

NOVEL III.

A lady, under pretence of confessing, and a pure conscience, being in love with a young gentleman, makes a sanctified friar bring them together, without his knowing anything of her intention.

THE boldness and great subtlety of the groom having been as much commended as the king's extraordinary discretion, Filomena, at the queen's desire, next began as follows:—I design to acquaint you with a trick, that a certain lady put upon a grave friar, which will be so much the more agreeable to us lay-people, as such folk think themselves both better and wiser than the rest of mankind, whereas they are quite the reverse, being for the most part persons who are unable to raise themselves in the world, and therefore fall back upon a profession which insures their being fed like swine. I shall tell this story then, ladies, in compliance with the order I have received, and show you, that even the clergy themselves, to whom we over-credulous women yield too implicit a faith, may be, and often are, tricked and imposed on, not by men only, but even by our own sex.

In our city (more full of craft and deceit than of friendship and faithful dealing) there lived not long since a lady, who, in point of beauty, high bred deportment, and subtle wit, was not inferior to any of her sex; her name, as well as that of every other person concerned in this novel, I shall beg leave to conceal, out of regard to some persons who might be offended, but who may now let the story pass with a smile. This lady, knowing herself to be nobly descended, and being married to a clothier, could by no means bring down her spirit, which made her look upon a tradesman, however rich he might be, as unworthy to mate with a gentlewoman. She saw with disgust that her husband, for all his wealth, had not the least understanding in anything out of his own business, and she determined not to admit of his embraces any farther than she was obliged, but to make choice of a gallant that should be more worthy of her. Accordingly she fell in love with a gentleman, of suitable years, to that degree, that unless she saw him every day, she could get no rest at night. But he, knowing nothing of the matter, had not the least regard to her; whilst she was so cautious, that she would trust neither to letters nor messages for fear of danger. Finding, however, that the object of her choice

was much acquainted with a certain friar, one of a gross person, yet esteemed by all as a very religious man, she judged that he would be the fittest agent to go between her and her lover. After maturely considering which would be the best method to take, she went one day to that church to which the friar belonged, and having called him aside, she told him that, when he was at leisure, she had a mind to confess.

The friar, seeing her to be a person of distinction, immediately heard her confession, and when that was over, she said, "Father, I require your advice and assistance upon a matter I will explain to you. I have told you of my relations and my husband, who loves me more than his own life, and who, as he is very rich, obliges me in everything that I ask for; for which reason I love him more than I do myself; and were I capable so much as of harbouring a thought, not to speak of doing an act, which should be contrary to his wishes and his honour, I should deem no woman more deserving of death than myself. Now there is a person whose name I am a stranger to, but who seems to be of some figure, and is, if I mistake not, an acquaintance of yours, a tall handsome man, very elegantly dressed in brown, who, being unacquainted, perhaps, with my upright intentions, seems to lay constant wait for me. I can never stir out of doors, or so much as go to the window, but he is always there: I wonder he is not after me now; which gives me infinite concern, because such things often bring unmerited scandal upon virtuous ladies. Sometimes I have thought of letting my brothers know; but then I considered that men frequently deliver messages in such a manner, that words ensue, and from words, blows; therefore, to prevent both scandal and mischief, I have hitherto held my tongue, resolving to acquaint you, rather than any other person, both because you are his friend, and because it is your duty to correct such abuses, not only in friends, but also in strangers. I entreat you then, for God's sake, that you would exhort him to leave off those ways; there are other ladies enough, who may be of that stamp, and would be proud of a gallant; but I am another sort of person, and such a thing gives me the greatest uneasiness." Having said this, she hung down her head, as if she was going to weep.

The holy father immediately understood who was the person she meant; and having commended her for her good disposition, believing it was all true that she said, he prom-

ised to take care that she should have no more disturbance of that kind; and knowing her to be rich, he concluded by recommending to her works of charity and alms-giving, not forgetting to mention his own particular necessities. The lady then said, "I beg of you, sir, if he should deny it, to tell him without any scruple, that I informed you myself, and am very uneasy about it." Having now confessed, and remembering what he had told her concerning charity, she put a sum of money into his hand, desiring he would say mass for the souls of her deceased friends; and rising from before his feet, she departed to her own house. In some little time the gentleman came according to custom, to the friar, who, after talking awhile to him upon indifferent matters, took him aside, and reproved him in a gentle manner for his design upon the lady. The other was much surprised, having never taken any notice of her, and but seldom passed by the house, and he would have excused himself, but the friar would not suffer him. "Never pretend to be surprised," he said, "nor spend your breath in denying it, for it is to no manner of purpose: this is no common report; I had it from her own lips. Such behaviour is very unbecoming in you; and, let me tell you, if there is a woman in the world averse to such follies, it is she: therefore, for her comfort, and your own credit, I exhort you to refrain, and let her live in quiet." The gentleman, more quick of apprehension than the friar, easily took the lady's meaning, and pretending to be out of countenance, promised to concern himself with her no more. He then left the friar, and went straightway towards the lady's house. There she was, looking out for him at the window, as usual, and she appeared so gracious and well pleased at the sight of him, that he found himself not mistaken: and from that time he used frequently to pass that way under pretence of business, to her great satisfaction.

After some time, when the lady perceived that she was as agreeable to him as he was to her, she had a mind to give him some farther proofs of her affection. To the friar she went again, and throwing herself at his feet in the church, began to lament most grievously. Thereupon he asked, with a great deal of concern, what new unpleasantness had happened? She replied, "It is only that accursed friend of yours, of whom I complained to you the other day: I think, in my conscience, he is born to be a perpetual plague to me, and to make me do what I should never think of otherwise;

nor shall I ever dare afterwards to lay myself at your feet."—"What," said the friar, "does he continue still to give you trouble?"—"Indeed, sir," quoth she, "since I made my complaint to you, he seems to do it out of mere spite; and for once that he used to come our way before, he now passes at least seven times. And would to God those walks and wanton gazings would content him; but he is now growing so audacious and impudent that no longer since than yesterday, he sent a woman to my house with his nonsense, and a present of a purse and girdle, as if I had wanted purses and girdles; at which I was, and am still, so much offended, that, had not the fear of God, and regard to you, prevented me, I had certainly done some wicked thing or other. But I kept my temper, nor would I do or say anything till I had first made you acquainted. Moreover, I returned those things to the woman that brought them, bidding her carry them back, and I sent her away with a flea in her ear; but fearing afterwards lest she might keep them herself, and tell him I had received them, as I am told those people often do, I called her back, and took them out of her hand in a passion, and here I have now brought them to you, that you may give them to him again, and tell him, that I want nothing that belongs to him; for, thank God and my husband, I have purses and girdles enough. Therefore, good father, I now tell you, that if he does not desist, I will immediately acquaint my husband and my brothers; for, happen what may, I had much rather that he should suffer, if it must be so, than that I myself should bear any blame on his account."

Having said this, she took a rich purse and a very pretty girdle from under her gown, shedding abundance of tears, and threw them into the friar's lap; and he, believing all she had told him, was incensed beyond measure. "I do not wonder, daughter," said he, "that you make yourself uneasy for these things, nor can I blame you; but I much commend you for following my instructions. I reproved him the other day, and he has ill performed what he promised; however, I will give him such a reprimand for what he has done before, and now also, that he shal be no more a plague to you. For Heaven's sake then, do not suffer yourself to be hurried away by passion, so as to tell any one; because it may be of bad consequence. Never fear any blame to yourself, for I will bear testimony to your virtue before God and man."

The lady seemed to be a little comforted; and changing the subject, as one who well knew the covetousness of him

and his brethern, "Holy father," she said, "for some nights past many of my relations have appeared to me in a vision, demanding alms; especially my mother, who seemed to be in such affliction, that it was terrible to behold. I believe it comes of her concern to see me in all this trouble, through this most wicked fellow. Therefore I desire, for the sake of their souls, that you would say the forty masses of St. Gregory, that God may deliver them from that fiery penance;" and having said this, she put a gold florin into his hand. The holy father received it very cheerfully, confirmed her devotion by good words, and divers examples, and, having given her his blessing, let her depart.

When she was gone, never thinking how he was imposed upon, he sent for his friend, who, finding him a little out of temper, supposed he had been discoursing with the lady, and waited to hear what he would say. The friar accordingly reiterated his former reproofs, chiding him severely for what the lady had now complained of concerning his offered present. The honest gentleman, who as yet could not tell to what all this tended, but faintly affected to deny his sending a purse and girdle, that he might not be entirely discredited by the good man, if it should have happened that the lady had given him any such thing. But the friar cried out in a passion, "How can you deny it, you wicked man? Behold, here it is; she herself brought it me with tears: see if you know it again." The gentleman appeared quite ashamed, and said, "Yes, indeed, I know it: I confess that I have done very ill, and, I promise you, now I know her disposition, that you shall hear no more complaints upon that score." After many such words, the simple friar gave him the purse and girdle; and, exhorting him to do so no more, let him go about his business.

The gentleman, now convinced of the lady's good will towards him, and that this was her present, went overjoyed to a place where he cautiously contrived to let the lady see both the purse and girdle in his possession, which gave her great satisfaction, as her scheme seemed now to take effect. Nothing was wanting now to complete it but the husband's absence, and it fell out soon after, that he was obliged to go to Genoa.

No sooner had he mounted his horse, and departed, than she went again to the holy man, and, after making great complaints and lamentations, she said, "Good father, I tell you plainly that I can no longer suffer this; but, as I prom-

ised to do nothing without first consulting you, I am come to excuse myself to you; and, to convince you that I have great reason to be uneasy, I will tell you what your friend, that devil incarnate, did this very morning. I know not by what ill fortune he came to know that my husband went to Genoa yesterday, but so it is, this morning he came into my garden, and got up by a tree to my window, that looks into the garden, opened it, and would have come into the chamber, only I jumped up, and was beginning to cry out, and certainly should have done so, had he not begged of me, for Heaven's sake and yours, to be merciful; telling me who he was: upon which I ran and shut the window. Now judge you if these things are to be endured; it is upon your account only, that I have suffered them so long." The friar was the most uneasy man in the world at hearing this:—"And are you sure," said he, "that it was that person, and no other?"—"Bless me!" quoth she, "do you think I could be so mistaken? I tell you it was he; and if he should deny it, don't believe him."—"Daughter," quoth the friar, "I can say no more than that it was a most vile, audacious action, and you have done your duty: but I beg of you, as God has preserved you hitherto from dishonour, and you have followed my advice twice before, that you would do so now: leave it then to me, without saying a word to any of your relations, and see if I cannot manage this devil unchained, whom I always took for a saint. If I can reclaim him from this lewdness, it will be well; if not, along with my best benedictions, I shall give you leave to do as you shall think most proper."—"For this once, then," quoth she, "I will give you no trouble; but do you take care that he be not offensive for the time to come, for I promise you I will come no more to you upon his account;" and, without more words, she went away, apparently very angry.

She was scarcely got out of the church, when in came the gentleman. The friar instantly took him aside, and assailed him with all the opprobrious language that could be used to a man, calling him villain, perjurer, traitor; whilst he, who had twice before found himself none the worse for these rebukes, listened very attentively, and endeavoured, by affecting great perplexity, to draw out the friar, and make him come to the point. "Why, what have I done," he said, "to deserve this treatment?" "Done!" cried the friar, "Mark the impudence of the fellow! he speaks for all the world as though these things had happened years ago, and were now

quite out of his mind. Pray, have you forgotten whom you insulted this morning? Where were you a little before daybreak?"—"That I cannot tell," replied the other; "but you soon heard of it, wherever I was."—"You say right," quoth he, "I did hear of it: I suppose you thought yourself sure, now the husband is from home? A very pretty fellow, truly! he gets into people's gardens in the night, and climbs up the walls by the help of the trees! You think, I suppose, that you will be able to seduce the lady by your importunity, that you get up to the windows at nights in that manner. There is nothing she so much detests as yourself, and yet you will persist. Truly, you are much the better for what has been said to you; but I assure you, she has hitherto held her peace purely at my request, and not out of the least regard to you: but she will conceal it no longer; and I have now consented, if you give her any farther disturbance, to let her take her own course. What would become of you, should she tell her brothers?" The gallant now perceived what he had to do, and, having quieted the friar with large promises, he bade him adieu. That night he got into the garden, and so up by the tree to the window, which was open, and where the lady stood expecting him. She received him with much joy, giving many thanks to the holy father for showing him the way; and from that time forth they had frequent opportunities of being together, without standing any farther in need of such a mediator.

[This story is related in Henry Stephens' introduction to the 'Apology of Herodotus.' It is told of a lady of Orleans, who in like manner employed the intervention of her confessor, to lure to her arms a scholar of whom she was enamoured. The tale of Boccaccio has suggested to Moliere his play of 'L'Ecole des Maris,' where Isabella enters into correspondence, and at length effects a marriage with her lover, by complaining to her guardian, Sganarelle, in the same manner as the clothier's wife to her confessor. Otway's comedy of the 'Soldier's Fortune,' in which Lady Dunce employs her husband to deliver the ring and letter to her admirer, Captain Belguard, also derives its origin from this tale.]

NOVEL IV.

A young scholar, named Felix, teaches one Puccio how he may be saved, by performing a penance which he shows him: this he puts into execution, and in the meantime Felix amuses himself with his wife.

When Filomena had finished her story, which was much commended by Dioneo, the queen, casting her eyes on Pamfilo, said: "Continue this amusement by some agreeable story." He replied, that he was very willing, and began thus:—Some people there are, who, whilst they endeavour to get to heaven themselves, inadvertently send others thither, which was the case of a neighbour of ours, as you shall hear.

Near to St. Brancazio, as I am informed, there lived an honest man, and one of good substance, whose name was Puccio di Rineri, who, being spritually minded, and having much converse with the Franciscans, was usually called Friar Puccio. This man, I say, regarding only his religious affairs, and having no family besides a wife and a maid-servant, used constantly to be at church, spending his whole time in saying Pater Nosters, hearing sermons, and going to masses; and for fasting, and all kinds of holy discipline, he was as devout as the best. What with his devotion, and perhaps his age, his wife, whose name was Isabella, a lady of about twenty-eight years of age, as fresh and fair and plump as an apple, had a great deal more fasting than she thought good for her, and many a time would gladly have been asleep or otherwise employed, when he was recounting to her the holy life of our Lord, the preachings of Father Anastasius, the lamentations of Mary Magdalen, and so forth.

Now at that time there returned from Paris a monk belonging to he convent of St. Brancazio, a comely young man, of good parts and learning, with whom our Puccio contracted an acquaintance; and as he was able to solve all his scruples, and appeared to be very religious, Friar Puccio would frequently invite him to his house, both to dine and sup, whilst his wife shewed him great civility on her husband's account.

Coming often to the house in this manner, he soon cast his eye upon Puccio's wife, and perceiving that he was nowise disagreeable to her, he took the first opportunity of making a discovery of his inclinations; but, though he found her disposed to compliance, he could in no way contrive the means,

for she would go nowhere out of her own house, and there it could not be, for Puccio was never far from home, which threw the young monk into a kind of despair. At last it came into his head how the thing might be carried on in the house, without any suspicion, though the husband was there all the time. Being one day alone with Puccio, he began in this manner: "I understand, Brother Puccio, that all your desire is to become holy, but it seems to me as if you took quite a round-about way, whilst there is a much shorter path, which the pope and the other great prelates know and follow, yet they are unwilling it should be divulged, for the sake of the clergy, because they live chiefly on the charities of the people, who in that case would have no further need to give them alms. Now as you are my friend, and have entertained me well at your house, if I thought you would tell nobody, and would practise this way I am speaking of, I would reveal it to you." Puccio was extremely impatient to know the secret swearing, by all that was sacred, never to divulge it without the monk's consent, and promising, if possible, to observe it; "As you make this promise," quoth the other, "I will tell you."

"You must understand, then, that the holy doctors of the church maintain, that penance in the manner I am going to lay down, is necessary to saintly beatitude. But take notice, I do not say that, after this penance, you will be no more capable of sinning. No; but all the sins committed before that time will be forgiven, and the sins committed afterwards will not be numbered to your damnation; but you may wash them away with holy water, as now you may do by venial sins. A man, then, must begin this penance by a strict confession of all his sins; after which fasting and abstinence are necessary for forty days; during which space you must refrain, not to say from women only, but even from your own wife. Besides this, you must have some place in your own house where you may look towards heaven all night long. Thither you are to go in the evening, and there you must have a very large table fixed in such a manner, that, as you stand upon your feet, the small of your back may lean upon it, whilst your arms are extended like a crucifix; and if you can make them reach to any peg of wood, so much the better. In this manner you are to gaze towards heaven, without altering your posture till the morning. If you had been a scholar, you should have repeated some prayers which I would have taught you; but as you

are not, you must say three hundred Pater Nosters, with as many Ave Marias, in honour of the Trinity; and, fixing your eyes upon heaven, you are still to remember God, the Creator of heaven and earth, and to bear in mind Christ's passion, standing in the manner that he was nailed to the cross; and, when the bell sounds in the morning, you may throw yourself upon your bed to sleep. You must afterwards go to church, and hear three masses at least, and say fifty Pater Nosters, and the like number of Ave Marias; and when this is done, you may go fairly and honestly about any business you may have to do; afterwards get your dinner, and be at church in the evening, where you must say a few prayers which I shall give you in writing, without which all would signify nothing; and in the evening return as before. If you follow this method, as I have formerly done, I hope, before the expiration of your penance, that you will perceive wonderful things of the eternal beatitudes; supposing, at the same time, that you are thoroughly devout."

Friar Puccio replied: "This is no such long and grievous affair, and with God's permission I will begin next Sunday;" and leaving his friend, he went and related the whole to his wife. She knew well enough what the monk meant by that standing still in one spot till the morning, and thinking it a very good plan, she told her husband that she was satisfied with that, or anything else that he should do for the good of his soul; and, to render his penance more effectual, she meant to keep him company with fasting, but with nothing else. So far they were agreed: and when Sunday came, he entered upon his course, whilst the monk came every evening to sup with her, bringing with him plenty of meat and drink, and he stayed with her always till morning, when it was Puccio's time to come to bed.

Now the room he had fixed upon for his penance was next to that where the lady lay, and divided from it only by a very thin partition. One night, when he had just got through a hundred of his Pater Nosters, he heard a noise in the next room; and, making a full stop, he called out to his wife, to know what she was doing. The lady, who was full of fun, replied: "Oh, my dear, I am wriggling here at such a rate!" "Wriggling! what do you mean?" "Why, how can you ask such a question?" said the lady, laughing heartily, as well she might; "have not I heard you say a thousand times that there is no resting in bed with an empty stomach?" Poor Puccio imagined that her not sleeping

was really occasioned by her going to bed without her supper, and said to her, in the simplicity of his heart, "I told you, my dear, not to fast; but since you would do it, even try and rest as well as you can: you make the very floor shake under my feet."—"Never mind: attend to what you are about, and I will do as well as I can." Puccio said no more, but resumed his Pater Nosters.

After that night the lady and the monk found out another part of the house, where they diverted themselves as long as the penance lasted. In the morning, when the monk was gone, Isabella used to return to her own bed, before her husband came to lie down. Things continuing in this way during the time that Puccio was qualifying himself for saintship, Isabella often said to the roguish monk, "Is it not a good joke, that you have put Puccio upon a penance by which we have gained paradise?" She liked it, indeed, so well, and was so fond of the good cheer supplied her by the monk, after the long time she had been kept on low diet by her husband, that even when the forty days of penance were out she found means to meet the monk elsewhere, and feast with him without stint. Thus I have made good the truth of what I said at the beginning of my story, for you see that whilst poor Friar Puccio thought of winning paradise by his hard penance, he only opened its doors to his wife and to the monk who had shown him the short cut thither.

NOVEL V.

Ricciardo, surnamed the Beau, makes a present of a fine horse to Francesco Vergellesi, upon condition that he should have the liberty of speaking to his wife; and she making him no reply, he answers for her, which accordingly has its effect.

THE ladies all smiled at Pamfilo's story, when the queen laid her next commands upon Eliza, who began pretty smartly, according to her usual manner, to the following effect:—There are many people who know so much, that they think others know nothing at all; and who, whilst they are designing to overreach others, are themselves outwitted: therefore, I hold that person very unwise, who puts another man's wits to the test, without any occasion: but as all of you may not be of my opinion, I will tell you what happened to a knight of Pistoia.

In the town of Pistoia there lived, not long since, a knight

named Francesco, of the family of the Vergellesi; a rich and prudent man in all respects, but covetous beyond measure. Being made provost of the city of Milan, and having furnished himself with everything necessary for such a high office, excepting a fine horse, he was at a loss where to meet with one that should please him. In the same town lived also a young gentleman, called Ricciardo, of no great family, but rich enough; a person so neat always and exact in his dress, that he was called the Beau; and who had long admired and followed the lady of Francesco, but hitherto without success. Now he was possessed of one of the most beautiful horses in all Tuscany, which he set a high value upon; but as it was known what a respect he bore towards Francesco's wife, Francesco was given to understand, that, if he would ask it of him, the other would gladly make him a present of the horse upon that account. He, therefore, moved by his avarice, requested the beau to sell him his horse, expecting, at the same time, that he should receive it as a gift. The other was much pleased with this, and said, "Sir, all you have in the world could not purchase that horse; but you may have him for nothing, provided I may first have leave to say a word or two to your wife in your presence, at such a distance from every one that I may not be overheard." Francesco, overswayed by his covetous temper, and thinking to make a fool of the other, answered, that he was willing, as soon as he pleased; and leaving him in the hall, he went upstairs to his wife, to tell her how easily he was going to get the horse, and to enjoin her to hear what the beau had to say, but to make him no answer, little or much. She blamed him for it, but, being bound to obey, went with him into the hall, to hear what the other had to offer. The beau, then leading her to a seat at the farthest part of the room, began in this manner:

"I make no doubt, most worthy lady, but that you have long perceived how great a slave I am to the force of your beauty, which far exceeds that of all the ladies I ever beheld; not to mention your personal accomplishments, enough to vanquish the most resolute and insensible of men: therefore, it would be needless to tell you by words, that my love is the most fervent that a man can possibly have for a woman; and so it shall continue whilst life shall actuate these frail limbs; and even to eternity, if we love in the next world as we do in this. Be assured, then, that you can call nothing your own, so much as me and mine: and to give

you proof of this, I should take it as a singular favour, if you would command me such a service as it is possible for me to perform, seeing there is nothing I should refuse for your sake. To you, therefore, whose I am, and on whom all my peace and happiness depend, I address myself for relief; humbly hoping, as I am wounded to the heart by your beauty, that your merciful goodness will not suffer me to perish. For suppose I should die, you could not help saying to yourself,—Alas! why did I not show some pity to my poor beau? which remorse would be greatly to your disquiet. Think, therefore, before it is too late; for it is in your power to make me either the happiest or most miserable of men. I hope, however, that the love I bear you will not be rewarded with death; but that you will speak one word of comfort to raise my drooping spirits, which are ready to take flight, whilst I am now before you." Here he ended, and with tears streaming from his eyes, and heaving deep sighs, sat expecting the lady's answer; whilst she, who had been hitherto unmoved, notwithstanding all his tilts, balls, serenadings, and such-like gallantries, was now heartily affected with his last most tender expressions; and began to feel that passion to which she had been hitherto a stranger; and though she was silent, out of regard to her husband's commands, yet could she not avoid disclosing, by her sighs, what she had much rather have declared by words.

The beau, having waited some time, and finding she made no answer, at first wondered very much; but he soon began to suspect that it was a trick of her husband's: and looking earnestly at her, and observing the sparkling of her eyes, cast now and then towards him, and some secret sobbings which she strove in vain to stifle; he began to take courage, and immediately hit on a new method, namely, to answer himself in the same manner as if she had spoken; which he did to this effect:—"Dear sir, I have most assuredly been a long witness of the great love you bear towards me, and am now farther convinced of it from your words, with which I am well satisfied, as indeed I ought: and if I appeared displeased or hard-hearted, do not imagine that I was really so; I always loved you far beyond every other person, but that behaviour was necessary, for fear of other people, and to preserve my own character: the time is now come when I have it in my power to repay your love: then be of good cheer; in a few days my husband goes to be provost at Milan, and as you have given him your favourite horse for my sake,

I promise you, upon my word, that then you shall have admittance, and (that I may have no occasion to speak to you again upon the subject, till the very time) take notice, that, as soon as you shall perceive two handkerchiefs hanging out of the window, which looks toward the garden, you must be careful nobody sees you, and come to me through the door, into the garden, where I shall be expecting you."

Having said this, as for the lady, he answered in his own person as follows: "Dear madam, I am so transported with your reply, that I scarcely know how to return you due thanks; but, were I able, no time would be sufficient to do it in the manner I could wish, and as I ought: I leave it therefore for you to imagine, as I find it impossible to describe: you may depend, however, on my being punctual to what you have proposed, and I shall always have a due sense of the great favour conferred upon me. Nothing now remains, my dearest love, but till that time to bid you adieu." All this while the lady said not one word. Ricciardo then stood up, and made towards the knight, who, coming to meet him, said with a smile, "Well, what think you, sir, have I performed my promise or not?"—"By no means," replied the beau, "for you promised that I should speak to your lady, and you have given me a statue to talk to." The knight was much pleased with this, and if he had a good opinion of his lady before, he had now a better. Afterwards he said, "You allow, I suppose, that the horse is mine." The beau replied, "Most certainly I do; but could I have thought no better success would have ensued on the bargain, I would have given him without any consideration, for as it is, you have bought him, and I not sold him." The knight laughed heartily, and being now provided with a horse, he set out, in a few days, for Milan, and entered upon his office.

The lady, being then at liberty, began to think a little of the beau's words, and the regard he had for her; and seeing him often pass by her house, she said to herself, "What am I about? Why do I lose all this time? My husband is at Milan, and will not return these six months, and when shall I meet with such another lover? There is none here that I need to be afraid of. I do not see why I should not make use of the opportunity, whilst I have it. Nobody will know it, or if they should, it is better to do it and repent, than to repent and not do it." Having made up her mind, therefore, she put two handkerchiefs out of the window, as the beau had said. This he saw with a great deal of joy, and that

very night went privately to the garden-door, which was open, as was also the door into the house, where he found the lady waiting for him: and though this was their first meeting, it was not the last, for, during the husband's stay at Milan, and even after his return, they found means of being frequently together, to their great mutual joy.

[La Fontaine's 'Magnifique,' and a drama by La Motte, have been taken from this tale. It seems also to have suggested a scene in Ben Johnson's comedy, 'The Devil is an Ass,' where Willepol makes a present of a cloak to a husband, for leave to pay his addresses to the wife for a quarter of an hour.]

NOVEL VI.

Ricciardo Minutolo is in love with the wife of Philippello Fighinolfi; and knowing her to be jealous of her husband, makes her believe that the latter was to meet his wife that night at a bagnio. Accordingly she goes thither, and, imagining she was with her husband all the time, finds herself at last with Ricciardo.

ELIZA had now concluded her story, and the queen, having commended the beau's ingenuity, laid the next charge upon Fiammetta, who began, with a smile, as follows:—It may be convenient to quit our own city at present, which, as it abounds in everything, is no less fruitful in examples relating to most subjects, and to recount, as Eliza has done, what has come to pass in other countries. Therefore, passing over to Naples, I shall set forth how one of those sanctified ladies, who seemed averse to all love intrigues, was, by the dexterous management of her lover, brought to taste the fruits of love, before she had known the flower of it; which will both divert you as to what is already past, and caution you, in certain points, for the time to come.

There lived at Naples, one of the most ancient and pleasant cities in all Italy, a young gentleman of great wealth, as well as nobly descended, called Ricciardo Minutolo; who, notwithstanding he had a beautiful lady for his wife, was enamoured of another, who was thought to surpass all the women in Naples. This lady was called Catella, and was the wife of a young gentleman named Philippello Fighinolfi, whom she loved and valued above all things. Now Ricciardo being in love with her, and doing everything which he thought might gain her affections, but to no manner of pur

pose, fell into despair; and as he was unable to get the ascendency over his passion, he had no pleasure in living, and yet no wish to die. Continuing in this disposition, he was one day advised, by the ladies of his acquaintance, to give over his vain pursuit, seeing that Catella regarded nothing so much as her own husband, of whom she was so jealous, that she was fearful of every bird that flew over his head, lest it might snatch him from her. Ricciardo hearing of this jealous disposition, began now to conceive hopes of success; but pretending to lay all such views aside, he gave it out that he had taken a fancy to another lady, towards whom he practised the same gallantries as he had before offered to Catella; and in a little time it was universally believed, that Catella was no longer the object of his passion, but this second lady; insomuch, that the former began now to put off that reserve which had hitherto appeared in her behaviour, and to treat him with the same openness and affability as her other neighbours.

Now it happened, the season of the year being sultry, that some companies of gentlemen and ladies went to divert themselves on the sea-shore, where they were to dine and sup; and Ricciardo knowing that Catella was gone thither with a party of people, went likewise with a set of his friends, and, after much importunity, as if he had no mind to remain there, he was persuaded to join the company of Catella and her friends. Presently all the ladies, Catella among the rest, began to banter him concerning this new love of his, at which he affected to be so much nettled that they talked all the more upon that subject. At length the members of the party being dispersed up and down, as is usual on such occasions, and Catella remaining only with a few friends where Ricciardo was, he dropped a hint of some intrigue of her husband's, which gave her a violent fit of jealousy, and she burned with impatience to know the truth. In a little time, therefore, she began to entreat Ricciardo, that, for the sake of the lady whom he loved most, he would make that matter clear to her, relating to Philippello.

"You have conjured me," Ricciardo replied, by a person, on whose account I can refuse nothing that is asked me, only you must promise never to speak a word to him, or any other person about it, till you find it really so, which I will shew you how you may be satisfied of, as soon as you please." She was now more strongly possessed of the truth of the matter, and promised to be silent. Taking her then apart, that they

might not be overheard, he thus addressed her: "Madam, if I now loved you in the manner I formerly did, I could not endure to tell you what must give you so much uneasiness; but as that is at an end, I shall be less fearful of making a full discovery. I do not know whether your husband was provoked at my loving you; or whether he had any suspicion of my being loved by you: but be this as it may, he has taken an opportunity, when I had the least cause to be jealous, of attempting to do by me, what he might suspect I meant to do by him; namely, to seduce my wife; for which purpose he has tried frequent messages, with which she has constantly made me acquainted, and returned such answers to them as I directed her. This very morning I found a woman in close conference with her, and imagining who she was, I asked my wife what the woman wanted? She told me that she came from Philipello; 'who, from such answers,' continued she, 'as you have made me send, from time to time, begins to have hopes of prevailing; and he now says, that he wants me to come to a resolution, and that he can so order it, that we may meet privately at a bagnio. He begs and entreats me most earnestly to be there; and were it not that you have made me hold him in suspense with such frivolous answers, I should have dealt with him in such a manner, that he should never have troubled me more.' I bore all the rest patiently, but now he has proceeded too far, and accordingly I resolved to tell you, that you might see how he has rewarded your most faithful love, for which I was just at death's door; but, lest you should think all this groundless, and that yourself may be an eye witness of it, I ordered my wife to tell the woman that she would meet him there to-morrow at nones, when everybody would be asleep; with which answer the messenger went away well pleased. Now I would not have you suppose that I intend to send her thither, but, were I in your place, I would go instead of her, and after you have been some time together, I would then make a discovery of myself to him; by which means you would shame him from being ever guilty of the like practices hereafter, and at the same time prevent the injury which is designed both to yourself and me."

Catella, without considering who it was that told her this, or what his designs might be, gave credit to it, as jealous people usually do to such stories; and calling to mind other circumstances to confirm it, she said, with a great deal of passion, that she would certainly do so, and that she would

so confound him, that he should never more dare to look a woman in the face.

Ricciardo was highly pleased; and now thinking that his scheme was likely to take effect, he confirmed her in that resolution, desiring her, nevertheless, not to mention what she had heard, which she accordingly promised. The next morning, then, he went to the woman who kept the bagnio, which he had mentioned to Catella, and begged her assistance in the affair, which she easily agreed to; and they contrived how it might be best effected. There was a dark room in the house, where she made up a bed, as he had directed her, and as soon as he had dined, he went thither to wait for Catella; whilst she, giving more credit to his words than she ought, returned home full of spleen. Philippello came home likewise, and, as it happened, in a very thoughtful mood, so that perhaps he did not show that fondness towards her that he usually did. This made her suspect him all the more; and she said to herself, "Truly he is taken up with thinking of the lady whom he is to meet to-morrow, but I will prevent it:" and she was considering all night long what she should say to him at their meeting. In a word, at the hour of nones she took a friend with her, and went directly to the bagnio and seeing the good woman, she inquired if Philippello was there. The woman having learned her lesson from Ricciardo, said, "Are you the lady that is to speak to him here?" Catella answered, "I am."—"Then," said she, "go in there." Catella, who went to seek what she would not willingly have found, entered the room where Ricciardo lay, her face being covered by a veil, and locked the door behind her. Ricciardo, taking her in his arms with transport, whispered, "Welcome, my soul;" whilst she, the better to sustain her assumed character, embraced and kissed him with great demonstrations of good will, but never said a word for fear he should recognise her. The room having no window was extremely dark, which suited both parties very well, nor could they see at all even after they had been there some time. Ricciardo led her to the bed without betraying himself by his speech, and there they remained together for a long time, with more delight to the one than to the other.

At length, when Catella thought it fit time to shew her resentment, she broke out in the following manner: "Miserable lot of women! How ill placed is the love we bear to our husbands! For these eight years have I loved you more

than my whole life; whilst you, most wicked man, give yourself up entirely to another woman. Whom do you think you are now with? You are with her, whom you have so often deceived with your false flatteries, pretending affection, when you had placed it elsewhere. Perfidious villain! I am Catella, and not Ricciardo's wife. Do you know my voice or not? I am, I tell you; and I think it long till I bring you into the light, to confound you with shame as you deserve. Alas! whom have I loved in this manner for so many years! Whom but this wretch, who, supposing himself in bed with another woman, has shewn more fondness than he ever did to me since we were married. Brisk enough you have proved yourself to-day, you renegade dog, that are so feeble and good for nothing at home. But, thank Heaven, it is in your own vineyard you have been labouring, not in another's, as you fancied. No wonder you did not come near me last night; you wanted to husband your strength that you might display all your prowess in another field. But once more, thank Heaven and my own foresight, the water has run in its regular channel, as it ought. Why do not you answer, you villain? Are you struck dumb with what I have said? I have a good mind to pull your eyes out of your head. You thought it had been all a secret; but you were mistaken." Ricciardo was greatly amused to hear her talk thus, and returned no answer but by his caresses; whilst she, resuming her complaints, exclaimed, "If you think to wheedle me in this manner you are mistaken; I will never rest till I have exposed you to all our neighbours and friends. Am I not as handsome as the wife of Ricciardo? Am I not as good a gentlewoman as she? Hands off; touch me not; you have performed exploits enough for one day. And now that you know who I am, whatever you might do would be all forced; but if I live you shall often be fain to ask, and get No! for your answer. I see no reason why I should not send to Ricciardo, who once loved me passionately, and yet could never boast that I vouchsafed to give him one kind look; and who knows what mischief may then ensue? You thought you had been with his wife all this time, and you are equally guilty as if you really had: therefore, were I to prove criminal with him, you could not blame me."

Her complaints were long and outrageous; till at length he began to think that if she was suffered to depart in this mood, mischief would certainly ensue; therefore he resolved to undeceive her: and holding her so fast in his arms, that she

could not get away, he said to her, "My life, do not make yourself uneasy; that which I could not have by dint of love, I have obtained by stratagem; I am your Ricciardo." She hearing this, and knowing his voice, would have leaped out of bed, but could not; and as she was going to cry out, he laid his hand upon her mouth, and said, "Madam, what has been now done cannot be undone were you to cry all your life long; and if it be made public by any means, two things must happen. The first, which is of great concern to you, is, that your honour and good name will be called in question; for though you should allege your being deceived, I will contradict it, and say that you came hither for reward, and because I would not give you as much as you expected, for that reason you made all this disturbance; and you know people are always more ready to believe what is bad, than what is good, of another, on which account my story would find the most credit. In the second place, a mortal enmity must ensue betwixt me and your husband; and things may be carried so far, that he may kill me, or I him, which would give you great uneasiness: therefore, my dearest life, do not lessen yourself and make mischief between us. You are not the first, nor will be the last, that has been imposed upon. It is not to deprive you of your honour, but it is the abundant regard I have for you that has put me upon using this device: and from this time forth myself, and all I am worth, shall be at your service. As you are discreet then in other things, I hope you will be so in this."

She expressed the utmost grief whilst he was speaking these words; but having listened so far to what he said, as to be convinced that it was reasonable, she replied, "I do not know how God will enable me to bear both the injury and the trick you have put upon me; I will make no noise here, where I have been brought by my own foolishness and over great jealousy; but this you may depend upon, that I shall never be at rest till I see myself revenged one way or other: therefore let me go; you have gained your point, and have done what you pleased; it is time to leave me, leave me then I beseech you." Ricciardo, who saw the anguish of her heart, resolved not to part with her before he made peace; using, therefore, all the kind and tender expressions he could think of to mollify her, he begged and prayed so earnestly that at last he made his peace, and they remained together a long while, with equal good will on both sides, and with great mutual delight. In fine, the lady having experienced

how much more racy were the lover's kisses than the husband's, her former cruelty to Ricciardo was changed into the warmest passion. She loved him ever after, and many a time were they happy in each other's arms. Heaven send us all the like good fortune.

[I do not think, says Dunlop ('History of Fiction'), that this story occurs either in the selections of Tableux published by Barbazan, or Le Grand, but I have little doubt that it exists among those which have not been brought to light. The incident has been a favourite one with subsequent novelists. For example, it corresponds with one of the tales of Sacchetti, and with the fourth of the Fourth Decade of Cinthio. It has also been versified by La Fontaine, in his 'Richard Minutolo.']

NOVEL VII.

Tedaldo, having a misunderstanding with his mistress, leaves Florence; he returns thither afterwards in the habit of a pilgrim, and makes himself known to her; when he convinces her of her mistake, and saves her husband from being put to death for his murder, for which he had been condemned. He then reconciles him to his brethren, and lives upon good terms with her for the future.

FIAMMETTA, who had been commended by all, was now silent; when, to prevent loss of time, the queen gave immediate orders to Emilia, who began thus:—I choose to return to our own city, which the two ladies who spoke last have departed from; and to relate how one of our own citizens regained his lost mistress.

There lived at Florence a young nobleman, called Tedaldo Ele, who was in love with a lady named Monna Ermellina, wife to one Aldobrandino Palermini, and well did his good qualities deserve success. But ill fortune was still in his way; for the lady, after shewing a liking to him, all at once refused to see him, and would receive no more messages from him, which threw him into utter despair; but, as his love was a secret, the cause of his melancholy was unknown. Divers means he used to regain the love, which had been lost without any fault of his; but, finding all in vain, he resolved to separate himself from the world, that he might deprive her, who had been the cause of his malady, of the pleasure of seeing him in that condition. Getting together therefore, what money he could privately raise, without saying a word of his intention to more than one friend, he went

away, and came to Ancona, calling himself Phillippo di Sanlodeccio, and hired himself to a merchant, with whom he went on shipboard to Cyprus, and who was so taken with his behaviour, that he not only allowed him a good salary, but took him into partnership, intrusting to him the management of the greater part of his affairs. These he ordered so discreetly, that, in a few years, he became a wealthy and famous merchant.

Whilst he was in this employ, though he would sometimes call to mind his cruel mistress, and be desirous of seeing her again, yet so firm was his resolution, that for six years together he got the better of his passion in this conflict. At last it happened, one day, whilst he was at Cyprus, that he heard a song composed by himself sung there, in which was largely set forth the mutual love which they bore to each other, whence it was inferred, that it was impossible she should ever forget him. That song inspired him with such a desire to see her, that he could no longer resist it; and, settling his affairs, he departed with only one servant to Ancona, consigned all his effects to a merchant at Florence, an acquaintance of his old friend at Ancona, and went off privately with his servant in the guise of a pilgrim just returned from the holy land. On arriving at Florence, he went to an inn which was kept by two brothers, near where his mistress lived; and the first thing he did was to go to her house, and endeavour to see her; but he found the windows and doors all made fast, which made him suspect that she was either dead or else changed her dwelling. Thence he turned his steps in a sorrowful manner towards the house where his brothers lived, and there he saw four of them standing at the door, dressed in mourning. This surprised him very much; and knowing he was so much altered since he had been away that he could not be easily known again, he applied to a shoemaker, and inquired the reason of their being in black. The shoemaker replied, "About fifteen days ago a brother of theirs, called Tedaldo, who has been long absent, was murdered; and I understand they have proved in court that he was killed by one Aldobrandino Palermini, who is arrested for it, because he had taken a fancy to his wife, and returned privately to be with her."

Tedaldo wondered much that any one should be so like himself as to be mistaken for him; and he was grieved for Aldobrandino. Finding that his mistress was alive and well, it being now night, he returned full of thought to his

inn, where having supped along with his servant, he was put to bed in a garret. There, what with his trouble, the badness of the bed, and perhaps his light supper, he was kept awake till about midnight; when he thought he heard some persons come from the top of the house, and he saw a light gleaming through the chinks of the door. Going softly, therefore, to peep, he saw a pretty young woman holding a candle, whilst three men were coming towards her, down stairs; and after some laughing together, one of them said, "We are now safe, God be thanked, since Tedaldo's death is proved by his brethren upon Aldobrandino Palermini, who has also confessed, and sentence is now passed: but yet it behoves us to keep it private; for should it be known, hereafter, that we are the persons, we should be in the same danger that he is in now." Having said this to the young woman, who seemed well pleased with it, they came down stairs and went to bed. Tedaldo, upon hearing what had passed, began to reflect how great and many were the errors to which the mind of man was subject; first, thinking of his brethren who had mourned for a stranger, and buried him by mistake for himself, and had afterwards taken up an innocent person upon a bare suspicion, who was accordingly condemned through false witnesses; and next, considering the blind severity of the law, and the ministers and dispensers of it, who, whilst they are solicitous to find out the truth, do often, by their horrid tortures, confirm a falsity; and instead of serving the cause of God and justice, are rather the ministers of iniquity and the devil. After this, he thought of Aldobrandino, and what was to be done to save his life.

In the morning, then, he went alone to the lady's house, and by chance finding the door open, he entered, and beheld her sitting upon the ground floor, in a little room, making a sad lamentation. "Madam," said he to her, "do not trouble yourself; your peace is at hand." She looked up, and replied with tears, "Honest man, thou seemest to be a stranger, what knowest thou either of my peace or my affliction?" "Madam," he replied, "I am a messenger sent by God from Constantinople, and am just now arrived, to turn your tears into joy, and to save your husband's life." "If you are but now arrived," she made answer, "and are come from Constantinople, what do you know either of me or my husband?" He then related to her the misfortune that had befallen her husband, how long they had been married together and many other circumstances, to which she was no stranger; where-

upon she fell down upon her knees, in amazement, believing him to be a prophet, and praying him, if he was come for Aldobrandino's sake, to make all possible dispatch, for the time was short. The pilgrim, assuming the aspect of a very holy personage, said, "Rise, madam, and attend to what I am going to say. This tribulation is now come upon you, on account of a sin formerly committed; therefore you must take care how you do the like for the time to come, lest a greater calamity befall you."—"Alas, sir!" quoth she, "I have been guilty of more sins than one; then tell me particularly what sin you mean, and I will do all in my power to amend." "Madam," returned he, "I know what sin it is; I do not ask for information: but only that you may have the greater remorse by confessing. But to come to the point:—Had you ever a lover?" The lady was in great amaze at this, supposing nobody had known anything of the matter; though from the time that person was slain who had been buried for Tedaldo, something of that kind had been talked of, occasioned by words imprudently let fall by Tedaldo's friend, whom he had intrusted with the secret. "I perceive that Heaven," she said, sighing deeply, "has revealed to you all the secrets of mankind, therefore I shall make no scruple of telling you mine. I did love, I confess, that unhappy young man whose death is now laid to my husband's charge, and which has given me also infinite concern; for though I might appear a little harsh to him, yet neither his parting, his long absence, nor his miserable death, has been able to drive him from my heart."—"The poor man who is dead," said the pilgrim, "never loved you, though Tedaldo did. But tell me what was the reason of your quarrelling with him? Did he ever give you any offence?"—"Most certainly he did not," she replied, "but it was all owing to a wicked friar, who, after I had mentioned to him, at confession, my love for that person, and our familiarity together, dinned such things into my ears that I am terrified still to think of them. He told me that if I did not desist the devil would carry me in his mouth to the bottom of hell, and put me into everlasting fire. I was so frightened, that I immediately resolved to break off all intimacy with my lover, and from that time I would no longer receive either his letters or his messages: though I really think, that had he persisted a little longer (for I suppose he went away in despair) I might have relented at last, because I had a true value for him."

"Madam," quoth the stranger, "this is the sin which now sticks close to you. It was of your own accord that you first loved Tedaldo; there was no force in the case; you were agreeable to each other, and acquaintance begot more love. Why, therefore, was he discarded in such a cruel manner? These things should always be considered beforehand; and you should never engage when you are likely to repent. Now, with regard to these friars, you must understand that, being one of them, I must be supposed to know something of their ways; and therefore, if I speak a little more freely concerning them, it will be more excusable, as it is all for your good. Formerly they were religious, good men; but they who call themselves so now-a-days, and would be thought such, resemble the others in nothing but their hoods; nor in those things entirely; for the first friars wore them coarse and scanty, to show their great contempt of all temporal things, when they wrapped their bodies in such a mean habit; but now they are made full, shining, and of the finest cloth that can be got; and, resembling in their cut the pontifical robes, they strut with them, like so many peacocks, in churches and all public places; and as a fisherman strives to take as many fish as possible with one cast of his net, so do these with their large folds envelop and captivate young maids, who have vowed chastity, widows, and other simple people: and this is their whole care and study; so that, to speak properly, they have not preserved the hoods of their predecessors, but only the colour of them. Formerly, also, they were solicitous for people's salvation, but now they desire only women, and as much money as they can get; for which purpose they terrify the ignorant with idle stories, making them believe that their sins are all to be purged away with alms-giving and saying of masses; for which purpose one sends bread, a second wine, and a third money, all for the souls of their departed friends. It is most certain that prayers, and giving charities, are both pleasing to God; but if people knew what sort of folks they were bestowed upon, they would sooner throw what they part with in that manner to the hogs. They know full well, that rich people are not so manageable as the poorer sort, for which reason they are for engrossing all wealth to themselves. They cry down luxury, whilst they wallow in all kinds of debauchery. They condemn usury and unjust gains, in order to purchase some great benefice or bishoprick, with what is given them by way of restitution; and which, being

detained from them, would occasion (they say) that person's damnation. And when they are told of these, and many other of their wicked practices, all the answer they make is, "*Do as we say, not as we do;*" as if it were possible for the sheep to have more resolution and constancy than the shepherd. But they would have you do as they say, namely, fill their purses with money; entrust them with all your secrets; be chaste, patient, forgivers of injuries; and never speak an ill word, which are all very good things; but for what reason? why, truly, that they may then do what, if we acted otherwise, they could not do! We all know, without money, there can be no sloth or idleness. If you spent your money for your own diversion, they could not have it for their maintenance: if you make free with the women about you, they would want the opportunity of being with them themselves: unless you were patient, and a forgiver of injuries, they would not dare to come into your house to corrupt your family. But why do I go through so many particulars? Let them first set the example, and then teach others. Suppose, however, what the friar told you to be true, namely, that it is a great crime to break the matrimonial vow:—Is not murder as bad? If, then, after Tedaldo had fallen into such despair as to leave his country, he had laid violent hands upon himself, would not you have been the occasion of it? Now, by your own confession, he deserved no such usage at your hands. This, therefore, is the crime, which is attended with its due punishment; for, as you broke your engagement with Tedaldo without reason; in like manner, without reason, is your husband in danger of his life upon his account, and yourself in great trouble. All that you can do, then, to be free, is to promise, and to be as good as your word, that if ever Tedaldo returns from his long banishment you will reinstate him in the favour he enjoyed before you were over-persuaded by that mischievous friar."

When the pilgrim had finished his long address, to which Ermellina listened with great attention, strongly impressed with the truth of what he said, she replied: "Holy man, I know that what you say is true, and I begin to see that the monks and friars are a set of very bad people, though hitherto I had a quite different opinion of them: I own myself also much to blame with regard to Tedaldo, and would do as you say, but how is it possible? He is dead; and what need is there then of making any promise about him?"

The stranger made answer, "Madam, I know that he is not dead, but alive and well, provided he has your good graces." "Be careful of what you say," she replied, "I saw him before our door, stabbed in several places, and I lamented much over him; which, I suppose, gave occasion to the scandalous story that was raised about us."—"Madam, say what you please, I assure you he is not dead; and if you will promise what I desire, I hope you will very soon see him."—"That," she replied, "I will do with all my heart; nothing could give me greater pleasure than to see my husband at liberty, and Tedaldo living." Thinking it now a fit time to discover himself, and to give her more assurance concerning her husband, "Madam," he said, "for your greater comfort, I have one secret to entrust you with, which you must keep as you value your husband's life." Then taking a ring out of his pocket, which she had given him the last night of their being together, he shewed it to her, saying, "Madam, do you know this?" She instantly remembered it, and replied, "Yes, sir, I gave it formerly to Tedaldo."—"And do you know me?" he said, raising from his seat, and throwing off his hood. Recognising Tedaldo, she started as if she had seen a ghost; and looking upon him not as one returned from Cyprus, but as newly risen from the dead, she would have fled from him; but he stopped her, saying, "Doubt not, Madam; I am your Tedaldo, alive and well; I never was dead, as you and my brothers believe." The lady began now to be a little better reconciled to him, and, throwing her arms about his neck, she cried, "Welcome home, my dear Tedaldo." He kissed her, and said, "Madam, we have no time now for these greetings; I must go and take care of your husband, of whom I hope that before to-morrow you will hear such news as will please you; and if I succeed according to my expectation, I will come and spend this evening with you; when I shall be able to give you a more full account than my time will permit at present." Resuming his former habit, therefore, taking his leave of her, he went to the prison to Aldobrandino, who lay expecting nothing but death; and being admitted by the favour of the keeper as a confessor, he sat down by him, and spoke in this manner: "I am a messenger from God (who has regard to your innocence) to bring you tidings of your deliverance; for his sake, then, I request one little favour which, if you grant, I make no doubt but that before to-morrow night you will hear of a pardon." Aldobrandino replied, "Sir, you are a stranger to

me, but I must suppose you to be a friend, since you are so solicitous about my deliverance. With regard to this deed, however, which has been sworn upon me, I am entirely innocent; I may have been bad enough in other respects, for which this may be a judgment upon me. And, then, what you please; be the recipient of ever such consequence, I promise to grant it, if I can obtain my liberty." "What I require," said the pilgrim, "is only a pardon for Tedaldo's four brothers, whenever they ask it of you, for having brought you into this trouble, under the belief that you were concerned in murdering their brother." Alderobrandino replied, "No one knows the pangs of revenge, and how eagerly it is coveted, but they who have received the injury: nevertheless, I forgive them, and if I obtain a pardon, I will do it in such a manner as shall be most agreeable to you." The pilgrim was pleased with this, and bid him have a good heart, for that before the next day at night he should be assured of his liberty.

Leaving the prisoner, the pilgrim then went straight to the signiory, and taking one of the lords aside, said to him, "Sir, it is the business of every one to endeavour to find out the truth, especially such as are in your station, in order that people may not suffer wrongfully; and that they who deserve punishment may have it; and this is what now brings me before you, with a view to your own honour and the confusion of the guilty. You know you have proceeded with severity against Alderobrandino, thinking you had proved upon him the murder of Tedaldo. This I aver to be false, as I shall prove to you before midnight, delivering the very murderers into your hands." The worthy lord, who was under great concern for Alderobrandino, gave ear to the stranger's story, and about midnight the two innkeepers and their maid were taken by the orders of the officers, and brought to the house by the pilgrim. Being threatened with the torture, they all confessed that it was they who had slain Tedaldo, like without knowing them. Being asked the reason, they declared that it was because he would have forced one of their wives when they were abroad. Having obtained this information he retired, with the highest precaution, and went privately to the lady Beatrice's house, to give her a full account of what had passed; and after giving her much joyful intelligence he spent the night with her, and happily ratified their thorough mutual reconciliation.

In the morning, having acquainted her with what he meant

to do, and enjoined secrecy, he went to attend to the affair of Aldobrandino; and the lords, after a full inquiry, released him, and sentenced the others to lose their heads on the spot where the murder was committed. Aldobrandino being discharged, and knowing that it was all owing to the stranger, he and his friends invited him to their houses, to make what stay he pleased, and shewed him all possible respect, the lady especially, who knew well to whom she was so obliging. And now, thinking it time to bring about a reconciliation between Aldobrandino and his brothers, who had incurred so much ill will since his discharge, that they were forced to go armed, the pilgrim claimed the fulfilment of the promise made him. Aldobrandino answered, that he was willing. The pilgrim therefore made him provide a great entertainment to which his relations and their wives were to be invited, and the four brothers with their wives, adding that he himself would ask the latter, as to his own feast. Accordingly he went to the four brothers, and after much entreaty prevailed upon them to ask pardon, in order to regain Aldobrandino's friendship; and when that was settled, he invited them to dine there the next day, giving them his word for their security. At dinner-time, therefore, the next day, Tedaldo's four brothers, all in mourning, with some of their friends, came first to Aldobrandino's house, who was expecting them; when, laying their arms down upon the ground, in presence of all the guests who had been invited to bear them company, and offering themselves to his mercy, they humbly asked his pardon. He received them with tears, and saluting them one after another, forgave the injury he had suffered. After this the sisters and their wives came also, and were graciously received by Ermellina and the other ladies.

The entertainment was now served up, and everything was agreeable, excepting a confirmed silence, occasioned by the late sorrow, which was represented by the habit of Tedaldo's relations; on which account the stranger's contrivance and invitation appeared unseasonable to many people. This he soon perceived, and resolved to remove when he saw a fit time; accordingly, when the dessert was served up, he rose, and said, "Nothing seems wanting to make this a merry meeting but the presence of Tedaldo, whom, as you have had him so long with you without knowing him, I mean now to show you."—Throwing off then his monk's disguise, he appeared in a green silk doublet, and his features were

recognised by all to their great surprise, though they gazed upon him for a considerable time before they could be convinced that he was the very person; which he perceiving, related many circumstances concerning both themselves and him for their farther satisfaction. Upon this his brothers and the rest of the men, all ran and embraced him, as did all the women except Ermellina; which, when Aldobrandino saw, he said, "What is the meaning of this, Ermellina? Why don't you welcome Tedaldo home, when everybody else has done it?" She replied, in the hearing of them all, that no one could rejoice more sincerely than herself, as she was obliged to him for her husband's life; but the scandalous words that had been given out concerning her, when that person was taken for Tedaldo, had made her cautious. Aldobrandino replied, "Away with these idle stories; do you think I regard them? He has sufficiently cleared himself by his regard for my life; do then as the rest have done." She desired nothing better, and was therefore not slow in obeying her husband's order. Aldobrandino's liberality was so agreeable to all present, both men and women, that their former misunderstanding was quite forgotten. After Tedaldo then had received every one's compliments, he tore the mourning off all his kindred, and ordered other clothes to be immediately brought; and having put them on, they concluded the feast with singing, dancing, and the like diversions Thence they went to Tedaldo's house, where they supped, and they continued feasting many days.

Still the people for some time looked upon him with the utmost amazement, as one risen from the dead; and perhaps his very brethren might have yet entertained some doubt about him, if one thing had not happened which made it clear who the person was that was slain. It was this:—Some sorry fellows of Lunigiana were going one day past the house, and seeing Tedaldo at the door, they stopped, and said, "How do you do, Fativolo?" Tedaldo replied, before some of his brothers, "You mistake your man." They hearing him speak, were out of countenance, and asked pardon, saying, "Never two people were more alike than you and a companion of ours, named Fativolo da Pontrimoli, who came hither fifteen days ago, and we can't learn what has befallen him. We wondered, indeed, how he came by this dress, for he was a soldier, as we are." The eldest brother, hearing this, inquired more particularly as to the clothes of the murdered man, and finding all the circumstances agree, it now

appeared plainly that it was Fativolo, and not Tedaldo, that was slain, and this set every one right with regard to that affair. Thus Tedaldo returned home rich, and continued his acquaintance with the lady, without any further interruption. May the like good fortune happen to us all!

NOVEL VIII.

Ferondo, by taking a certain drug, is buried for dead, and the abbot, who has an intrigue with his wife, takes him out of the grave and puts him into a dungeon, where he is made to believe that he is in purgatory. Being raised up again, he rears a child as his own, which the abbot had got by his wife.

EMILIA's long novel (though it did not appear long to the company, on account of the variety of incidents with which it was stored) was now brought to a conclusion, when the queen gave a nod to Lauretta, who began in this manner:—I am going to relate a thing which has more the appearance of fiction than of truth, and which I call to mind from what has just been told us, of one person's being mourned for, and buried instead of another. I purpose, then, to tell you how a living person was buried as though he had been dead; how, afterwards, it was believed by himself, as well as other people, that he was risen from the dead, and not actually living all the time; and how another obtained the name of a saint upon that score, and was adored as such, when he deserved rather to have been severely punished.

There was in Tuscany, and is still, an abbey situated in a retired spot, as is commonly the case with such establishments. Its newly appointed abbot was a man of holy life in every respect, save in the matter of woman, and this he managed so well, that he was never suspected; therefore was he universally regarded as godly, pious and righteous in all points. Now it happened, that among the abbot's many acquaintances was a rich countryman, named Ferondo, a gross blockhead, whom the abbot admitted into his society only to make sport of the dullard's simplicity. In the course of their acquaintance, the abbot found that the rustic had a very handsome wife, with whom he grew so violently in love, that day or night he could think of nothing else; but being informed that Ferondo, however stupid in other things, was cunning enough in watching over her, he almost despaired

of success. He managed, however, so artfully, that he prevailed upon Ferondo to bring her sometimes for their amusement to his gardens at the abbey, when he would discourse to them of the beatitudes of eternal life, and of the pious works of many righteous people departed hence. This had such an effect upon the lady, that she had a great desire to confess to him, and asked leave of her husband, which was granted. Coming, then, to confession, greatly to the abbot's satisfaction, and sitting at his feet, she began, before she entered upon her subject, to this effect—

"Sir, if God had given me a different sort of a husband, or if he had given me none at all, perhaps with your instruction it would be easy for me to pursue the path which you have pointed out to eternal life: but when I consider what sort of a person I am tied to, I must look upon myself as a widow, and yet worse than married, in respect that I can have no other husband as long as he lives. Besides, he is so unreasonably jealous, that I live in constant misery with him: therefore, before I proceed to confession, I must beg a little of your advice in this particular; for till I find some remedy in this respect, confession or any other good work will be of little effect."

This touched the abbot in the most sensible part; and now thinking that fortune had opened a way to what he had so long aimed at, he replied:—"Daughter, I can easily believe how grievous it is for a pretty young lady, as you are, to have a fool for her husband, and it is worse to have a man that is jealous; therefore, you must suffer extremely, that have both one and the other. But, to be plain with you, I see no advice that can avail, or remedy, but one; namely, to cure Ferondo of that jealousy. The remedy, in such a case, I know well how to apply, provided you will keep it a secret.—"Father," quoth the lady, "never fear; I would die before I would make a discovery contrary to your injunction; but how is it possible?" The abbot replied, "If we desire he should be cured, it will be necessary for him to go first into purgatory."—"What, go there alive?"—"He must die first, and then go thither; and when he shall have suffered quite enough to cure him of his jealousy, we shall use a few prayers to bring him to life again, and it shall be done."—"Then I must remain a widow?"—"For a time, and you must be exceedingly careful not to be prevailed upon to marry elsewhere, for that would be a very bad thing, and as you must return to Ferondo when he comes to life again, he

would be more jealous than ever."—"Well, so long as there is a cure, and I am not to be a prisoner all my life, do as you will, I am content."—"But," said the abbot, "what reward shall I have for this service?"—"Father, whatever lies in my power to give; but what can such a one as myself offer worthy the acceptance of a person like you?"—"Madam, it is in your power to do as much for me, as it is in mine to do for you. As I am ready, then, to perform what shall be for your ease and comfort, so should you be mindful of me in a point where my life and welfare are both concerned."—"If it be so, I am ready and willing."—"Then you must grant me your love, for which I entirely languish."

She was startled at this, and said, "Alas! my father, what is it you would have? I took you always for a saint. Do holy men request such favours of ladies who come to them for advice?"—"My dearest life, let not this surprise you," replied the abbot; "my sanctity is not the less on this account, because that abides in the soul, and what I now ask of you is only a sin of the body. But be that as it may, the force of your beauty is such that it constrains me to do thus: and I tell you, that you may be proud of it above all other women, since it captivates the saints, who are used to behold the beauties of heaven. Besides, although I am an abbot, I am a man, like others, and as you see, not old. Nor should you think much of this matter, but rather be desirous of it, for all the time Ferondo is in purgatory I will supply his place, and it will never be so much as suspected, because every one has the same opinion of me that you yourself just now declared. Do not refuse the grace that heaven sends you; there are enough that would be glad of what you may have, and shall have, if you wisely follow my advice. Moreover, I have jewels both rich and rare, which I intend shall all be yours. Do, therefore, my dearest love, what I would willingly do for you."

The lady had her eyes fixed on the ground, not knowing how to deny him, and yet to grant the favour seemed not so well. The abbot, perceiving that she had listened and did not immediately reply, considered the conquest half made, and continued using such arguments as before, till he had convinced her that it would be a good action. So, at last, she said, with a blush, that she was willing to comply, but not till her husband was sent to purgatory. The abbot was well enough satisfied with this, and replied, "He shall go thither directly; all you have to do is to see that he comes

hither to-morrow, or next day, to make some stay with me." Saying this he put a fine ring on her finger, and dismissed her. She was overjoyed with the present, supposing she should have many more such; and returning to her friends, related wonderful things of the abbot's great sanctity, after which her husband and she went home together.

A few days afterwards Ferondo went to the abbey, and as soon as the abbot saw him he prepared a drug, which had been given him in the Levantine countries by a great prince, who assured him it was the very powder which the Old Man of the Mountain was in the habit of using whenever he had a mind to throw any one into a trance, in order to send him into his paradise or take him out of it. By giving more or less he could, without doing them any harm, make them sleep as long as he pleased: insomuch, that, whilst its effect lasted, you would never imagine but that they were dead. Of this drug the abbot took as much as would operate for three days, and mixing it up with a glass of wine, without Ferondo's perceiving it, gave it to him to drink. He afterwards walked with him into the cloisters with several of the monks, and they began to be merry together as usual. In some little time the drug began to work; Ferondo was taken with a sudden drowsiness, he nodded as he stood, and at last fell down in a profound sleep. The abbot seemed much concerned at the accident, making them unbutton his collar, and throw cold water in his face, in order to bring him to himself, as though it had been occasioned by some fumes from his stomach, or such like disorder: but when they found all was in vain, and perceived, on feeling his pulse, no signs of life remaining, it was concluded by all that he was certainly dead. Accordingly they sent to acquaint his wife and relations, who came immediately, and after they had lamented over him for a time, he was buried by the abbot's direction, with his clothes on, in one of the abbey vaults. His wife went back to her own house, giving out, that she resolved never to stir a step from a little son that she had by Ferondo; and continuing there, she took upon herself the management of the child, as well as of the estate he had left behind. The abbot, when night came, took with him a monk of Bologna, whom he could trust, and who was just come thither upon a visit; and together they carried Ferondo out of the vault into a dungeon, which served as a prison for the monks when they had committed any fault. Then, stripping him of his clothes, they dressed him in the habit of a

monk, and left him upon a bundle of straw, till he should come to himself; whilst the monk, being instructed by the abbot, as to what he would have done, was to wait there without anybody's knowing anything of the matter, till the sleeper came to his senses.

The next day the abbot went, attended by some of his monks, to pay his visit of condolence to the widow, whom he found in her weeds, very sorrowful; and, after a little consolation, he put her softly in mind of her promise. She, finding herself now at liberty, and seeing another valuable ring on his finger, gave her consent, and it was agreed that he should come the next night. When that time came, therefore, he put on Ferondo's clothes, and taking his faithful monk along with him, went thither, and stayed till the morning; and this practice he followed so long, that he was frequently seen passing backwards and forwards by the neighbours, who all agreed, that it was Ferondo who walked there, doing penance; and many strange stories were reported among the simple country people about it, and were carried to the lady, who knew full well what kind of ghost it was.

The Bolognese monk, as soon as he perceived Ferondo growing a little sensible, come in, making a most terrible noise; and having a bundle of rods in his hand, began to chastise him severely. Ferondo, crying and howling, could say nothing but, "Where am I?" The monk replied, "Thou art in purgatory."—"How!" said Ferondo, "and am I dead then?"—"Most surely," answered the monk. Thereupon Ferondo began to lament for himself, his wife, and child, uttering the strangest things in the world. The monk then gave him something to eat and drink, which Ferondo seeing, "What!" said he, "do dead people eat!" The monk replied, "Yes; and what I now bring, thy wife sent this morning to church, to have mass said for thy soul."—"God bless her!" quoth Ferondo, "I was very fond of her before I died, to that degree that I hugged her all night in my arms, and did nothing but kiss her, and sometimes the other thing when I had a mind." Then, finding himself hungry, he began to eat and drink, and the wine being very bad, he said, "God confound her! why did she not give the priest some wine from the cask next the wall?" No sooner had he filled his belly than he had the same discipline over again; when, roaring out amain, he said, "What is all this for?" The monk answered, "Because thou art jealous of thy wife, who is one of the best of women."—"Alas! you

say true; she was a most dear creature: but I did not know that it was a sin to be jealous, or I would not have been so." —"Oh! you should have taken care of that whilst you were in the other world; and if it should happen that you return thither, remember what I now say, and be jealous no more." —"Then, do people ever return thither again, after they have been dead?"—"Yes, if God so pleases."—"Oh!" quoth Ferondo, "if that should be my case, I would be the best husband in the world; I would never beat her, or say an angry word, unless it were for the bad wine she has sent me, and letting me have no candles, that I am forced to eat in the dark."—"She sent candles enough," answered the monk, "but they are all burnt out at the mass."—"Well," quoth Ferondo, "you say very true, and when I go back she shall do as she pleases: but pray tell me who you are that do all this to me?" The monk replied, "I am now dead; but I was of Sardinia, and am condemned to this penance, to give you food and drink, and two whippings a day, because I formerly commended a certain master of mine for being jealous."—"But," said Ferondo, "is there nobody here besides us two?"—"Yes, thousands; but you can no more see or hear them, than they can hear or see us." "Then," quoth Ferondo, "how far may we be distant from our own countries?"—"Many millions of leagues." "Why truly that is far enough," quoth Ferondo, "then we must certainly be out of the world."

In this manner was Ferondo kept there for ten months, whilst the abbot continued his visits to the wife; till at last she proved with child, when it was thought convenient that her husband should be delivered out of purgatory, that he might father the child. The next night, therefore, the abbot went into the dungeon, and called upon Ferondo, with a counterfeited voice, saying, "Take courage, Ferondo; it is now the will of God that thou return into the other world, when thou shalt have a son by thy wife, whom thou shalt name Benedict; because, through the prayers of thy holy abbot, and thy most virtuous wife, and the intercession of St. Benedict, this favour is granted thee." Ferondo was overjoyed at hearing this, and said, "Thanks be to God and to St. Benedict, and to the abbot and to my precious wife." In the next wine that was sent him, the abbot mingled as much of the former drug as would make him sleep four hours; and then they put his own clothes upon him, and carried him into the vault where he had been interred.

By break of day Ferondo came to himself, and seeing through a crevice of the vault a glimmering of light, which he had been utterly deprived of for ten months, he began to think himself alive, and shouted, "Let me out, let me out." At the same time he lifted up the cover with his head, it being of no great weight, and was making his way out, when the monks, having just ended their morning service, ran thither, and knowing Ferondo's voice, and seeing him rise out of the vault, they were so terrified that they fled to tell the abbot. The holy man, who seemed to them to be just risen from prayer, said, "Fear not, my sons; take the crucifix and holy water, and follow me, that we may see what kind of miracle this is." Ferondo was quite pale, as might be supposed, having been so long confined without seeing any light; but as soon as the abbot appeared, he fell at his feet, saying, "Your prayers, most holy father, as it has been revealed to me, and those of St. Benedict, and my wife, have delivered me out of purgatory, and brought me to life again, for which I pray God to send you all sorts of good luck now and always."—"Blessed be the power of God!" quoth the abbot; "go, then, my son, as this mercy is bestowed upon you, and comfort your wife, who has been in the utmost trouble ever since you departed from us; and be henceforth a faithful servant of God."—"That's very good advice your reverence gives me," said Ferondo. "Never fear but I'll kiss her ever so much when I see her, I'm so fond of her." Away then he went, and the abbot, left alone with his monks, affected to regard this miracle with great veneration, and ordered them devoutly to sing the *Miserere*.

In the mean time, Ferondo returned to his house, where every one that saw him fled, as if they had beheld some terrible sight, affirming that he was risen from the dead. His wife also expressed the utmost consternation. In some little time, however, after they were convinced of his being alive, they began to ask him all sorts of questions, which he was never at a loss to answer, for he seemed to have come back quite a clever fellow from the other world; he told them news concerning the souls of their departed friends, and strung together out of his own head the finest stories in the world about purgatory, not forgetting to relate to them, in full assembly, what had been revealed to him by the mouth of the Hangel Bagarel just before his resurrection. In fulfilment of that prediction Ferondo's wife bore him a son whom they called Benedict Ferondi. Ferondo's resurrection, and what

he himself reported about it, every one giving entire credit to his words, added greatly to the renown of the abbot's extraordinary sanctity. Ferondo also remembered the many sound whippings he had got for his jealousy and was cured of it for ever, as the abbot had promised he should be; and his wife lived very happily with him from that time forth, and had the pleasure of the abbot's company, as often as they could conveniently meet together.

NOVEL IX.

Gillette de Narbonne cures the King of France of a complaint, and demands the Count de Roussillon in marriage, as her reward; he marries her against his will, and goes in a pet to Florence, where he falls in love with a young lady, and lies with his own wife, thinking himself with his mistress. She has two sons by him, and, by that means, matters are accommodated at last between them.

THERE remained now only the queen to speak (saving his privilege to Dioneo); therefore she began, without being called upon, in this manner:—Who can say anything now to please, since we have heard Lauretta's story? It is well for most of the company she was not the first; for few would have been thought so agreeable after her; and so I believe it will be with regard to such as are yet to speak; however, I shall keep to the subject, and give you my story, such as it is.

There lived in France a gentleman named Isnard, Count de Roussillon, who, because he was in a bad state of health, always kept a physician in his house, called Master Gerard de Narbonne. Now the count had an only son, whose name was Bertram, a fine youth, who had been brought up along with other children of his own age, amongst whom was a daughter to this physician, called Gillette, who had for him an infinite esteem and love, more than is common for one at such an age. His father's death, and his being left to the king's care, obliged him to go to Paris, which gave her the utmost concern. Shortly afterwards, her own father dying also, she would gladly, if she could have found a fit pretence, have gone thither to see Bertram; but such care was taken of her, because she was an heiress, that it was impossible. Being now of an age to marry, and being unable to forget her first love, though she had many suitors, on one of whom her guardians would willingly have bestowed her, she rejected them all, without assigning any reason.

In the meantime, her love growing more violent every day, being fed by the admirable reports she heard of Bertram, news was brought that the King of France had a dangerous ailment, which succeeded an ill-cured swelling in his breast, and gave him extreme anguish; nor could he meet with a physician, though he had tried many, who was able to heal it; on the contrary, they had made it worse, insomuch that he was determined to have no more advice. This was agreeable enough to the young lady, not only as it afforded a pretence for her going to Paris, but also she had great hopes, if the disorder proved of the kind suspected, of getting Bertram for her husband. So, mixing up such drugs as her father was wont to use in cases of that nature, she hastened away to Paris. The first thing she did, after she had obtained a sight of Bertram, was to wait upon the king, and desire he would acquaint her with his malady. His majesty most graciously condescended to grant her request, when she was instantly convinced she was able to make a cure, and said, "Sir, if you will give me leave, I hope, without any pain or trouble, to restore your health in eight days." The king could not help making a jest of this, saying to himself, "What! shall a woman undertake to do that which has baffled all the best physicians in the world?" He thanked her, therefore, for her good intention, and told her that he was resolved to try no more medicines. "Sir," replied the lady, "you ridicule my art because I am young, and a woman; but I must remind you that I do not pretend to this from my own knowledge; but I rely upon the help of God, and the judgment of Master Gerard de Narbonne, who was a most eminent physician in his time, and my father."

The king, hearing this, said to himself, "Perhaps she is sent from God to my assistance; why should I not, therefore, make trial of her, as she promises to cure me, without any trouble, in so short a time?" Then turning to her, "But suppose you should prove mistaken, what would you forfeit for making us break our resolution?" She replied, "If your majesty pleases, you may set a guard upon me; and if you are not cured in eight days, then burn me alive: but if I succeed, and you get well, what reward am I then to have?" "You are a maiden, it appears," said the king: "we will dispose of you in marriage to a person of great account."— "Sir," quoth she, "I accept your offer of a husband, but I will name the person, excepting all of your royal house." He immediately promised, and she began to administer her

medicines; and before the limited time she had wrought a thorough cure. The king then said, "Fair maid, you have well earned a husband."—"Then, sir," she replied, "I have gained the Count de Roussillon, whom I have loved ever since I was a child."

The king thought her demand very great, but, as he had given his word, he would not depart from it. He sent for the count, therefore, and said to him, "Bertram, you are now of age to take upon you the government of your own country; it is our will that you return thither, and take a wife whom we shall recommend to you."—"And who is the lady, my liege?" replied Bertram. "It is she," said the king, "who has cured us with her medicines." Bertram knew and liked her well enough, only that he thought her birth too low for his quality; so he said, with some disdain, "And does your majesty then mean to give me a doctress for my wife? Surely I may do much better for myself."—"Then," quoth the king, "would you have us to be worse than our word? She requested to have you, and we promised, upon condition that we were made well."—"My liege," replied Bertram, "you may take away what I now possess, or you may add to it if you please; but this I assure your majesty, that I will never consent to such a match."—"It is our pleasure to have it so," continued the king; "she is a prudent and beautiful lady, and you may be happier with her, than if you were married to one of greater quality."

Bertram then held his peace; and the king ordered a magnificent entertainment in honour of the nuptials, and, when the day came, Bertram espoused Gillette, much against his will, in the king's presence, which being done, he took his leave of his majesty, as if he was going to keep his wedding in his own country; but, instead of that, he went a quite different way, and came to Tuscany. Finding that the Florentines were at war with the Sienese, he willingly joined them, and, having a command given him, he continued some time in their service. The bride, not at all pleased with his behaviour, went to Roussillon, in hopes of gaining his affections by her prudent management, and was received by his people as their lady and mistress. Finding everything in disorder, on account of her husband's long minority, she used such care and diligence in restoring all to its wonted tranquillity, that she gained the favour and good-will of her subjects, who blamed the count highly for his neglect of her. When that was done, she sent two knights

to him, desiring to know if it was on her account he stayed away from home; and bidding them tell him that she was willing to go elsewhere to please him. But he answered roughly, that she might use her pleasure; "For," said he, "I will go to her only when she shall have this ring upon her finger, and a son, begotten by me, in her arms." Now he valued the ring at a high rate, and never parted with it from his finger, because of some secret virtue which he supposed it to have. The knights looked upon the condition as implying two impossibilities; and, perceiving that he was not to be moved from his resolution, they returned, and reported his answer.

The lady was much afflicted at this, and began to consider, if there were no way to effect these two points, and consequently regain her husband. Taking her measures then accordingly, she assembled all the principal people of the country, when she recounted to them, in a most tender and affectionate manner, all that she had done for the love of the count, and what ensued thereupon; and she let them know, that it never was her intention, by staying amongst them, to keep him in perpetual banishment; therefore was she resolved to spend the remainder of her life in pilgrimage, for the good of her soul; and her desire was, that they would take the government upon them, and inform the count that she had quitted possession, and left the country with a design never more to return. As she was speaking these words, they all began to weep, and they entreated her much to change her resolution, but to no purpose. Taking her leave, then, and being attended only by a maid-servant and a relation, they set forward together like pilgrims, having provided themselves well with money and jewels; and, without anybody's knowing whither they were gone, they made no stop till they came to Florence. There, by chance, they met with an inn that was kept by a widow, where she stayed, with a desire of learning some news concerning her lord.

The next day it happened, that he passed by the house on horseback, along with his troops, when, though she knew him very well, yet she asked the landlady who he was? "It is a gentleman, a stranger," answered she, "one of the best-natured men in the world, and much respected in this country, who is in love with a gentlewoman of small fortune in this neighbourhood: she bears a good character, but is yet unmarried, on account of her scanty circumstances, and lives with her mother." The countess, upon hearing this,

began to consider more fully what she should do. Having learned the young lady's name, and where she lived, she went one day to the house, and, after the usual salutation, told the mother, that she had a mind to speak to her: the other rose, and said, with all her heart. They then went into a chamber by themselves, and, sitting down together, the countess began in this manner: "Madam, you seem to be as little obliged to fortune as myself; but perhaps it is now in your power to do us both a kindness." The other replied, that she should be very willing, if it could be done honestly. The countess rejoined, "I put myself entirely into your hands; if you deceive me, you frustrate the purposes of both."—"Speak out," said the lady; "you shall find I never will deceive you."

The countess then related her whole story, from beginning to end, part of which the old lady had heard from common report: and she added, "You hear the two things which I am to compass to gain my husband, with regard to which there is no person in the world can serve me besides yourself, if it be true, as I am told, that he is violently in love with your daughter."—"Madam," quoth the lady, "there is some appearance of the count's liking my daughter; but whether there be anything real, that I cannot pretend to say. But what has this to do with your affair?"—"That," answered she, "I shall soon tell you. But you must first hear what I intend to do in consideration of this service of yours. I understand that you have a daughter, of age to marry, whom you are forced to keep at home with you, for want of a fortune to give her: now my design is, to advance such a sum of money as you yourself shall think sufficient to marry her reputably." The lady liked the offer very well, but yet, having the spirit of a gentlewoman, she replied: "Tell me what you want to have done, and if it appear fair and honest, I will do it most willingly, and leave the reward to you."

The countess then said, "You must give the count to understand, by some person whom you can trust, that your daughter is ready to oblige him, as soon as she can be assured that he has that real love for her which he pretends, and which she knows not how to credit, unless he sends her the ring that he usually wears, and which, she hears, he sets such a value upon. This ring you must give to me, and then you may let him know that your daughter is at his service, and that he may come privately hither as soon as he pleases,

when you must put me to bed to him instead of your daughter. Perhaps, by God's grace, I may prove with child; so that, by having his ring on my finger, and a son of his in my arms, which were the two conditions required, I may live with him afterwards as my husband, and you be the happy instrument of it." The lady hesitated at first, fearing some scandal might befall her daughter; but considering afterwards how fit it was that the good lady should have her husband, she not only promised her assistance, but in a few days obtained the ring, much against the count's will, and afterwards put the lady to bed to him, instead of her daughter. Accordingly it happened, that she became with child of two sons, as the event made manifest. Nor was it once only that the lady afforded the countess the enjoyment of her husband's embraces, but many times, taking her measures so secretly that the count never knew a word of it, but always thought he was with his mistress, not with his wife.

At last, when the countess found herself pregnant, not wishing to give the lady more trouble, she said to her, "Madam, my end is now answered, I have nothing more to do but to satisfy you for your trouble." She replied, "If you are contented, it is well; I did it out of no expectation of reward, but only as it appeared to me quite a right thing." "Madam," continued the countess, "I am entirely pleased, and I intend to make you a recompense suitable to your great merit." She then, moved by her necessity, desired, but with the utmost modesty, a hundred pounds for her daughter's portion; whilst the other, knowing her great worth, and hearing her humble demand, gave her five hundred, and jewels to the amount of as much more, for which she was very thankful; and, to take away all pretence of the count's coming any more to her house, the lady removed with her daughter to her friends in the country.

After some time, Bertram, hearing that his countess had departed out of his territories, went thither, at the request of his subjects, whilst she stayed at Florence, till her time of labour came, when she was brought to bed of two sons, very like their father. She took care to have them well nursed, and, in due time, without being discovered by any person, she came to Montpelier, where she made some stay to rest herself, and to make inquiry concerning her husband. Hearing, at last, that he was to make a great feast at Roussillon, on the day of All Saints, she went thither in the same pilgrim's dress as she first set out in; and, just as the guests

were going to sit down at table, she pressed forwards, through the midst of the crowd of gentlemen and ladies, with her two children in her arms, till, coming where the count was, she threw herself at his feet, saying, with tears, "My lord, I am your unhappy wife, who have undertaken a long pilgrimage, in order that you might return to your own house. I conjure you, in the presence of God, that you abide by the two conditions enjoined me by the two knights whom I sent to you. Behold, not one son only of yours in my arms, but two; and, see, here is the ring." The count was confounded with admiration, recognising the ring, and the children too, they were so like him, and said:—"How can this have happened?" The countess then related the whole story before all the company; whilst he, knowing her to speak the truth, perceiving also her constancy and good management, and beholding two such pretty children, was moved to fulfil his promise, as well as to oblige the whole company, who requested him to take her as his wife: upon all these considerations, I say, he laid his inveterate hatred aside, raised her up, and saluted her, acknowledging her for his lawful countess, and the two babies for his children: he ordered also suitable apparel to be brought for them, to the great joy of the whole court; whilst the feasting continued not that day only, but many others: and from that time he shewed her all due respect, and they continued happy together as long as they lived.

[Shakespeare's 'All's Well that Ends Well' is based on this story.]

NOVEL X.

Alibech, a young convert to Christianity, goes into the desert of the Thebaid, where Rustico, a pious hermit, teaches her how to put the devil in hell.

Dioneo, who had listened attentively to the queen's novel, seeing it was now his own turn, did not wait to be called on, but began at once with a smile. "Perhaps you never heard, fair ladies, how the devil is to be put into hell? I will, therefore, without departing much from the tenor of all that has been said to-day, tell you how the thing is done. Peradventure it may be for the good of your souls to know it; and at the same time you will learn that although Love more willingly abides in gay palaces and luxurious chambers

than in the hovels of the poor, yet none the less doth he whiles make his power felt midmost thick forests and rugged mountains and in desert caverns; whereby it may be understood that all things are subject to his puissance.

To come, then, to the fact, I say that in the city of Capsa in Barbary there was aforetime a very rich man, who, among his other children, had a fair and winsome young daughter, by name Alibech. She, not being a Christian and hearing many Christians who abode in the town mightily extol the Christian faith and the service of God, one day questioned one of them in what manner one might avail to serve God with the least hindrance. The other answered that they best served God who most strictly eschewed the things of the world, as those did who had betaken them into the solitudes of the deserts of Thebaïs. The girl, who was maybe fourteen years old and very simple, moved by no ordered desire, but by some childish fancy, set off next morning by stealth and all alone, to go to the desert of Thebaïs, without letting any know her intent. After some days, her desire persisting, she won, with no little toil, to the deserts in question and seeing a hut afar off, went thither and found at the door a holy man, who marvelled to see her there and asked her what she sought. She replied that, being inspired ofGod, she went seeking to enter into His service and was now in quest of one who should teach her how it behoved to serve Him.

The worthy man, seeing her young and very fair and fearing lest, an he entertained her, the devil should beguile him, commended her pious intent and giving her somewhat to eat of roots of herbs and wild apples and dates and to drink of water, said to her, "Daughter mine, not far hence is a holy man, who is a much better master than I of that which thou goest seeking; do thou betake thyself to him;" and put her in the way. However, when she reached the man in question, she had of him the same answer and faring farther, came to the cell of a young hermit, a very devout and good man, whose name was Rustico and to whom she made the same request as she had done to the others. He, having a mind to make a trial of his own constancy, sent her not away, as the others had done, but received her into his cell, and the night being come, he made her a little bed of palm-fronds and bade her lie down to rest thereon. This done, temptations tarried not to give battle to his powers of resistance and he, finding himself grossly deceived by these latter, turned tail, without awaiting many assaults, and confessed

himself beaten; then, laying aside devout thoughts and orisons and mortifications, he fell to revolving in his memory the youth and beauty of the damsel and bethinking himself what course he should take with her, so as to win to that which he desired of her, without her taking him for a debauched fellow.

Accordingly, having sounded her with sundry questions, he found that she had never known man and was in truth as simple as she seemed; wherefore he bethought him how, under color of the service of God, he might bring her to his pleasures. In the first place, he showed her with many words how great an enemy the devil was of God the Lord and after gave her to understand that the most acceptable service that could be rendered to God was to put back the devil into hell, whereto He had condemned him. The girl asked him how this might be done; and he, 'Thou shalt soon know that; do thou but as thou shalt see me do.' So saying, he proceeded to put off the few garments he had and abode stark naked, as likewise did the girl, whereupon he fell on his knees, as he would pray, and caused her abide over against himself.*

* La jeunette lui demanda comment cela se faisoit. A laquelle Rustique dit: "Tu le sçauras tantost; et pour ce tu feras ce que tu me verras faire." Si commença à dépouiller ce peu d'habillemens qu'il avoit vestus, et demeura tout nud, et autant en fit la filette, puis se mit à genoux comme s'il l'eust voulu adorer, et fit mettre tout incontinent la fille vis-a-vis de lui. En estant ainsi Rustique échaufté, et brûlant plus que devant, pour la voir ainsi toute nue et belle, la résurrection de la chair va venir, laquelle regardant Alibech toute émerveillée, dit: "Rustique, quelle chose est-ce que je te vois qui pousse si fort en avant, et je ne l'ai point?" "O, ma fille," dit Rustique, "ceci est le diable, dont je t'ai parlé, et vois-tu maintenant, il me donne tel tourment qu'à peine le puis-je souffrir." Alors dit la jeune fille: "Ho, loué soit Dieu que je vois que je suis mieux que toi de n'avoir point ce diable." Rustique dit: "Tu dis vrai, mais tu as une autre chose que je n'ai pas, et l'as en échange de cette-ci." "Eh, quoi?" dit Alibech. Rustique repondit: "Tu as l'enfer, et je te veux bien dire que je croi que nostre Seigneur t'ait ici envoyée pour le salut de mon ame, parce que si ce diable me veut toujours donner cet ennui, et qu'il te plaise avoir tant de compassion de moi, que de souffrir que je le remette en enfer, tu me donneras, une très-grande consolation, et feras un très-grande service à Dieu, et grand plaisir, au moins si tu es venue ici pour faire ce que tu dis." La jeune fille à la bonne foi répondit: "O mon père, puisque j'ai l'enfer, mettez-y le diable quand il vous plaira." Alors dit Rustique: "Ma fille, tu sois de Dieu benite, allons donc et l'y mettons, afin qu'il me laisse en paix:" et ceci dit, mena la fille sur un de leurs petits lits, et lui enseigna comme elle se devoit mettre pour imprisonner ce maudit diable. La jeune fille, qui jamais n'avoit mis aucun diable en enfer, sentit pour la première fois un peu de mal: par quoi elle dit à Rustique: "Pour

Matters standing thus and Rustico being more than ever inflamed in his desires to see her so fair, there came the resurrection of the flesh, which Alibech observing and marvelling, "Rustico," quoth she, "what is that I see on thee which thrusteth forth thus and which I have not?" "Faith, daughter mine," answered he, "this is the devil thereof I bespoke thee; and see now, he giveth me such sore annoy that I can scarce put up with it." Then said the girl, "Now praised be God! I see I fare better than thou, in that I have none of yonder devil." "True," rejoined Rustico; "but thou hast otherwhat that I have not, and thou hast it instead of this." "What is that?" asked Alibech; and he, "Thou hast hell, and I tell thee methinketh God hath sent thee hither for my soul's health, for that, whenas this

certain, mon père, ce diable doit estre une mauvaise chose, et véritablement ennemie de Dieu, puisqu'à l'enfer mesme il fait mal quand on l'y remet." Rustique répondit: "Il n'en adviendra pas toujours ainsi," et pour faire qu'il n'advînt plus, ils l'y remirent par six fois avant de descendre de dessus de lit, tant que pour cette nuit ils lui tirerent tellement l'orgueil de la teste, qu'il demeura volontiers en paix. Mais y retournant plusieurs fois less jours suivans, et la jeune fille obéissante toujours à le lui tirer, advint que le jeu lui commença à plaire: par quoi elle dit: "Rustique, bien voi-je qu'il est vrai ce que disoient ces gens de bien de Capse, que le servir à Dieu estoit si douce chose, et pour certain je n'ai aucune souvenance que rien que je fisse jamais fust si plaisant, comme de remettre le diable en enfer, et par ce je juge que toute personne qui pense à autre chose qu'à servir Dieu, est une grande beste:" par quoi elle alloit souvent à Rustique, et lui disoit: "Mon père, je suis ici venue pour servir à Dieu et non pour demeurer oisive. Allons remettre le diable en enfer." Faisant laquelle chose, elle disoit aucune fois: "Rustique, je ne sçai pourquoi le diable s'enfruit d'enfer, car s'il y demeuroit aussi volontiers comme l'enfer le reçoit et le tient, il n'en sortiroit jamais." Ainsi donc la jeune fille invitant souventefois Rustique et le confortant au service de Dieu, lui secoua tellement la bourse de son pelisson, que telle heure il se sentoit froid ou un autre eust sué; et par ainsi commença à dire à la fille, qu'il ne falloit point chastier le diable, ni le remettre en enfer, sinon quand par orgueil il levoit la teste; et par la grace de Dieu ils l'avoient tant chastié, qu'il prioit nostre Seigneur qu'on le laissast en paix; et ainsi il imposa un peu de silence à la jeune fille, laquelle quand elle vit que Rustique ne la requeroit plus de remettre le diable en enfer, lui dit un jour: "Rustique, pourtant si ton diable est chastié, et ne te donne plus d'ennui, mon enfer ne me laisse point en paix; par quoi je te prie qu'avec ton diable tu aides à oster la rage à mon enfer, comme j'ai aidé avec lui à tirer l'orgueil du tien." Rustique qui ne vivoit que de racines, d'herbes, et d'eau, pouvoit très-mal satisfaire à la poste de la jeune fille, et lui dit qu'il faudroit trop de diables pour oster la rage à un enfer, mais qu'il feroit ce qu'il pourroit; et ainsi aucunefois la contentoit, mais c'estoit si peu, que ce n'estoit autre chose que jetter une febve en la gueule d'un lion, dont la jeune fille (lui estant avis qu'elle ne servoit pas à Dieu autant comme elle eust bien vanlu) murmuroit.

devil doth me this annoy, an it please thee have so much compassion on me as to suffer me put him back into hell, thou wilt give me the utmost solacement and wilt do God a very great pleasure and service, so indeed thou be come into these parts to do as thou sayst."

The girl answered in good faith, "Marry, father mine, since I have hell, be it whensoever it pleaseth thee;" whereupon quoth Rustico, "Daughter, blessed be thou; let us go then and put him back there, so he may after leave me in peace." So saying, he laid her on one of their little beds and taught her how she should do to imprison that accursed one of God. The girl, who had never yet put any devil in hell, for the first time felt some little pain; wherefore she said to Rustico, "Certes, father mine, this same devil must be an ill thing and an enemy in very deed of God, for that it irketh hell itself, let be otherwhat, when he is put back therein." "Daughter," answered Rustico, "it will not always happen thus;" and to the end that this should not happen, six times, or ever they stirred from the bed, they put him in hell again, insomuch that for the nonce they so took the conceit out of his head that he willingly abode at peace. But, it returning to him again and again the ensuing days and the obedient girl still lending herself to take it out of him, it befell that the sport began to please her and she said to Rustico, "I see now that those good people in Capsa spoke sooth, when they avouched that it was so sweet a thing to serve God; for, certes, I remember me not to have ever done aught that afforded me such pleasance and delight as putting the devil in hell; wherefore methinketh that whoso applieth himself unto aught other than God His service is a fool."

Accordingly, she came ofttimes to Rustico and said to him, "Father mine, I came here to serve God and not to abide idle; let us go put the devil in hell." Which doing, she said whiles, "Rustico, I know not why the devil fleeth away from hell; for, and he abode there as willingly as hell receiveth him and holdeth him, he would never come forth therefrom." The girl, then, on this wise often inviting Rustico and exhorting him to the service of God, so took the bombast out of his doublet that he felt cold what time another had sweated; wherefore he fell to telling her that the devil was not to be chastised nor put into hell, save whenas he should lift up his head for pride; "and we," added he, "by God's grace, have so baffled him that he

prayeth our Lord to suffer him abide in peace;" and on this wise he for awhile imposed silence on her. However, when she saw that he required her not of putting the devil into hell, she said to him one day, "Rustico, and thy devil be chastened and give thee no more annoy, my hell letteth me not be; wherefore thou wilt do well to aid me with thy devil in abating the raging of my hell, even as with my hell I have helped thee take the conceit out of thy devil."

Rustico, who lived on roots and water, could ill avail to answer her calls and told her that it would need overmany devils to appease hell, but he would do what he might thereof. Accordingly he satisfied her bytimes, but so seldom it was but casting a bean into the lion's mouth; whereat the girl, herseeming she served not God as diligently as she would fain have done, murmured somewhat. But, whilst this debate was toward between Rustico his devil and Alibech her hell, for overmuch desire on the one part and lack of power on the other, it befell that a fire broke out in Capsa and burnt Alibech's father in his own house, with as many children and other family as he had; by reason whereof she abode heir to all his good. Thereupon, a young man called Neerbale, who had spent all his substance in gallantry, hearing that she was alive, set out in search of her and finding her, before the court had laid hands upon her father's estate as that of a man dying without heir, to Rustico's great satisfaction, but against her own will, brought her back to Capsa, where he took her to wife and succeeded, in her right, to the ample inheritance of her father.

There, being asked by the women at what she served God in the desert, she answered (Neerbale having not yet lain with her) that she served Him at putting the devil in hell and that Neerbale had done a grievous sin in that he had taken her from such service. The ladies asked, "How putteth one the devil in hell?" And the girl, what with words and what with gestures, expounded it to them; whereat they set up so great a laughing that they laugh yet and said, "Give yourself no concern, my child; nay, for that is done here also and Neerbale will serve our Lord full well with thee at this." Thereafter, telling it from one to another throughout the city, they brought it to a common saying there that the most acceptable service one could render to God was to put the devil in hell, which byword, having passed the sea hither, is yet current here. Wherefore do all you young ladies, who desire to have the grace of

God, learn to put the devil in hell, because it is very acceptable to God, highly agreeable to both parties concerned, and much good may grow out of it and follow it.

[This is the 'Diable d'Enfer' of La Fontaine.]

Dioneo having finished his story, and the queen knowing her sovereignty to be now at an end, took the crown from her head, and placed it on that of Filostrato, saying, "We shall soon see whether the wolves govern the sheep, better than the sheep have hitherto governed the wolves." He replied, with a smile, "If my advice had been taken, the wolves would have taught the sheep to put the devil in hell, just as Rustico taught Alibech; so do not call us wolves, since you yourselves have not been sheep. However, I take upon me the command." Giving the proper orders, then, to the steward, as to what he would have done, he turned to the ladies, and said:—"It has been my misfortune, ever since I was able to judge of anything, to be always in love with one or other of you ladies; nor has it availed me in the least that I have been humble, obedient, and desirous of pleasing to the utmost of my power; for I have constantly been discarded at last for some other lover, going still from bad to worse, and so I expect to continue till I go to my grave. Therefore I intend that our subject for to-morrow shall be something suitable to my own case; namely, concerning persons whose amours have had an unfortunate conclusion." Having said this, he gave them leave to depart. The garden was so pleasant, that every one chose to walk thither, especially as the sun was going down, where some diverted themselves with observing and running after the kids, rabbits, and other creatures, that were skipping about them. Dioneo and Fiammetta sat singing together the song of Guilielmo and the Lady of Vergiù. Filomena and Pamfilo played at chess. And thus they were all differently employed till the time of supper, which came upon them a little unexpectedly; when, the table being spread by the side of the fountain, they supped with a great deal of pleasure. As soon as the cloth was taken away, Filostrato, not to go out of the path which had been followed by the queens who had gone before him, commanded Lauretta to begin a dance with a song. She replied, "May it please your majesty, I know nothing of other people's songs, nor any of my own at

present, which would please so agreeable a company; but, if you will accept of such a one as I can call to mind, I will sing it with a great deal of pleasure." The king made answer, "Nothing of yours can be disagreeable: sing such as you have." She then began, with a musical voice, but in a desponding manner, thus:—

SONG.

CHORUS.

Who can with so much cause complain,
As I, who love and sigh in vain?

He whose Almighty word hath taught to move
The heavens, and every star above;
Hath made me as you see,
All brisk and debonair, that I might be
A pattern of perfection priz'd;
Yet I'm despis'd.
Who can, &c.

I heretofore
Was by a fond admirer made to prove
The soft persuasive force of love;
Swift pass'd the hours of transport thus divine,
Whilst all his wishes, all his thoughts, were mine:
But he's no more.
Who can, &c.

One more morose and vain
Next made his court;
But from report,
He jealous soon became;
And falsely left me in distress,
Tho' conscious then I was,
That charms like mine, for gen'ral view design'd,
Were to that lover's wishes still confin'd.
Who can, &c.

For ever be that day accurst,
When, to commence a bride,
I laid my sable weeds aside,
Which dress so well became me first;
Thrice happy damsel, had I died
Before that fatal change I tried.
Who can, &c.

And thou, my dearest lover, once, and friend,
Who, with the saints above,
Enjoy'st the fruits of virtue and of love,
My pray'r attend

Amidst the sweet repose, which now you find,
Think on me, poor distressed maid;
And nature's final debt when paid,
May we then meet, and be for ever join'd!
Who can with so much cause complain,
As I, who love and sigh in vain?

When the song was ended, lighted torches were brought, and set upon the grass; and they continued, till the stars began to go down, singing and making merry. Then the king thought it time for them to depart, and, wishing one another a good night, they retired to their respective chambers.

THE FOURTH DAY.

THE sun had now driven all the stars from the heavens, and dispelled the vapours of the night from the earth, when Filostrato arose, and ordered all the company to be called. They walked then into the garden, and dined, when the time came, where they had supped the preceding night. Taking a nap afterwards, whilst the sun was at its height, they returned at the usual time to the fountain side. Here Filostrato commanded Fiammetta to begin, who spoke in a soft agreeable manner, as follows.

NOVEL I.

Tancred, Prince of Salerno, puts his daughter's lover to death, and sends his heart to her in a golden cup; she pours poison upon it, which she drinks, and dies.

OUR king has given us a most melancholy subject for this day's discourse; considering, that we who came hither to be merry, must now recount other people's misfortunes, which cannot be related without moving compassion, as well in those who tell, as in those who hear them. Perhaps it is designed as an alloy to the mirth of the preceding days. But whatever his reason may be for it, I have no business to make any alteration in what he has been pleased to decree. I shall, therefore, mention an unhappy story to you, worthy of your most tender compassion.

Tancred, prince of Salerno, was a most humane and generous lord, had he not in his old age defiled his hands in a lover's blood. Through the whole course of his life he had only one daughter; and happy had he been not to have possessed her. No child could be more dear to a parent than she was, and so loath was he to part with her, that she had been many years of marriageable age before he could bring himself to bestow her on a son of the Duke of Capoa. But she was soon left a widow, and came home again to her father. She was a lady of great beauty and understanding, and continuing thus in the court of her father, who took no care to marry her again, and it seeming not so modest in her to ask it, she resolved at last to have a lover privately. Accordingly she made choice of a person of low parentage, but noble qualities, whose name was Guiscard, with whom she became violently in love, as he did with her. Such being their secret feelings, the lady who desired nothing so much as to be with Guiscard, and did not dare to trust any person with the affair, contrived a new stratagem in order to apprize him of the means. She wrote a letter, wherein she mentioned what she would have him do the next day for her; this she put into a hollow cane, and giving it to him one day, she said, pleasantly, "You may make a pair of bellows of this, for your servant to blow the fire with this evening." He took the cane, supposing very justly that she had some covert meaning, and, opening it at home he found the letter, which filled him with the utmost joy; and he immediately took measures to meet her in the manner she had directed him.

On one side of the palace, and under a mountain, was a grotto, which had been made time out of mind, and into which no light could come but through a little opening dug in the mountain, and which, as the grotto had been long in disuse, was grown over with briars and thorns. Into this grotto was a passage, by a private stair-case, out of one of the rooms of the palace, which belonged to the lady's apartment, and was secured by a very strong door. This passage was so far out of every one's thoughts, having been disused for so long a time, that nobody remembered anything about it: but love, whose notice nothing can escape, brought it fresh into the mind of the enamoured lady. To keep this thing entirely private, she laboured all alone some days before she could get the door open; when, having gone down into the cave, and observed the opening, and how

high it might be from the bottom, she acquainted Guiscard with these details. He then provided a ladder of cords; and casing himself well with leather, to defend him from the thorns, he fixed one end of the ladder to the stump of a tree which was near, and slid down by the help of it to the bottom, where he stayed, expecting the lady. The following day, therefore, having sent her maids out of the way, under pretence that she was going to lie down, and locking herself up alone in her chamber, she open the door and descended into the grotto, where she met her paramour to their intense mutual satisfaction. Thence she shewed him the way to her chamber, where they were together the greatest part of the day, and, after they had taken proper measures for the time to come, he went away through the cave, and she returned to her maids. He did the same the next night; and he followed this course for a considerable time, till fortune, as if she envied them their happiness, thought fit to change their mirth into mourning.

Tancred used sometimes to come into his daughter's chamber, to pass away a little time with her. Going thither, quite unperceived, one day after dinner, whilst Ghismond (that was the lady's name) was with her maids in the garden; and, not wishing to take her from her diversion, finding also the windows shut, and the curtains drawn to the feet of the bed, he threw himself down in a great chair, which stood in a corner of the room, leaned his head upon the bed, drew the curtain before him, as if he concealed himself on purpose, and fell asleep. In the mean time, Ghismond, having made an appointment with her lover, left the maids in the garden, and came into her chamber, which she secured, not thinking of any person being there. Then she went to meet Guiscard, who was in the cave waiting for her, and brought him into her chamber; when her father awoke, and was a witness to all that passed between them. This was the utmost affliction to him, and he was about to cry out, but upon second thoughts he resolved to keep the matter private if possible, that he might be able to do more securely, and with less disgrace, what he had resolved upon. The lovers stayed together their usual time, without perceiving anything of Tancred, who, after they were departed, got out of the window into the garden, old as he was, and went, without being seen by any one, very sorrowful to his chamber.

The next night, according to his orders, Guiscard was seized by two men as he was coming out of the cave, and carried by them in his leathern doublet to Tancred, who, as soon as he saw him, said, with tears in his eyes, "Guiscard, you have ill requited my kindness towards you, by this outrage and shame which you have brought upon me, and of which this very day I have been an eye-witness." Guiscard made no other answer but this: "Sir, love has greater power than either you or I." Tancred then ordered that he should be kept in secret custody. The next day he went to his daughter's apartment as usual (she knowing nothing of what had happened), and, after locking the door, said to her, weeping, "Daughter, I had such an opinion of your modesty and virtue, that I could never have believed, had I not seen it with my own eyes, that you would have violated either, even so much as in thought. The recollection of this will make the pittance of life that is left very grievous to me. As you were determined to act in that manner, would to Heaven you had made choice of a person more suitable to your own quality; but this Guiscard is one of the very meanest persons about my court. This gives me such concern, that I scarcely know what to do. As for him, he was secured by my order last night, and his fate is determined. But with regard to yourself, I am influenced by two different motives; on one side, the tenderest regard that a father can have for a child; and on the other, the justest vengeance for the great folly you have committed. One pleads strongly in your behalf; and the other would excite me to do an act contrary to my nature. But, before I come to a resolution, I would hear what you have to say for yourself." And when he said this, he hung down his head, and wept like a child.

She, hearing this from her father, and perceiving that their amour was not only discovered, but her lover in prison, with difficulty refrained from breaking out into loud and grievous lamentations, as is the way of women in distress; but she conquered this weakness, and putting on a settled countenance, resolved firmly in her own mind not to outlive her Guiscard, who she supposed was already dead. With the utmost composure, therefore, she spoke to this effect: "Father, it is not my purpose either to deny, or to entreat; for as the one can avail me nothing, so I intend the other shall be of little service. I will by no means bespeak your love and tenderness towards me; but shall first, by an open

confession, endeavour to vindicate myself, and then do what the greatness of my soul prompts me to. It is most true that I have loved, and do still love, Guiscard; and whilst I live, which will not be long, shall continue to love him; and if such a thing as love be after death, I shall never cease to love him. To this I was induced, not so much by female frailty, as by his superior worth, and the little care you took to marry me again. It ought to have been plain to you that, as you are made of flesh and blood, your daughter was not stone or iron, and you should have remembered, though now you are old, what is the nature and force of youthful passions; and as your best years have been spent in part in the toils of war, you should the better have known what are the effects of ease and indulgence, not alone on the young, but even on the old. I am then a creature of flesh and blood; I am still young; and for both reasons possessed with desires which have become the more intense because having been married I have known the pleasure derived from gratifying them. Unable, then, to resist their force, I determined to obey their impulse; and, with all the power of my soul, I resolved, that so far as in me lay, no shame should befall you or me from that to which a natural weakness impelled me. In this I was favoured by Love and Fortune, who showed me a very secret way by which, unperceived by any one, I attained my wishes; and this, whoever disclosed it to you, or however you came to know it, I do not deny. I did not take up with Guiscard by accident, as many do, but I chose him deliberately before all others, admitted him to my chamber with settled forethought, and with resolute perseverance on his part and mine, I long enjoyed my desires. It appears from what you say, that you would have been less incensed if I had made choice of a nobleman, and you bitterly reproach me for having condescended to a man of low condition. In this you speak according to vulgar prejudice, and not according to truth; nor do you perceive that the fault you blame is not mine, but fortune's, who often exalts the unworthy, and leaves the worthiest in low estate. But, not to dwell on such considerations, look a little into first principles, and you will see that we are all formed of the same materials, and by the same hand. The first difference amongst mankind, who are all born equal, was made by virtue; they who were virtuous were deemed noble, and the rest were all accounted otherwise. Though this law, therefore, may have been obscured by contrary custom,

yet is it discarded neither by nature nor good manners. If then you regard only the worth and virtue of your courtiers, and consider that of Guiscard, you will find him the only noble person, and the others a set of poltroons. With regard to his worth and valour, I appeal to yourself. Who ever commended man more for everything that was praiseworthy, than you have commended him? and deservedly, in my judgment; but if I was deceived, it was by following your opinion. If you say, then, that I have had an affair with a person base and ignoble, I deny it; if with a poor one, it is to your shame, to let such merit go unrewarded. Now, concerning your last doubt, namely, how you are to deal with me, use your pleasure. If you are disposed to commit an act of cruelty, I shall say nothing to prevent such a resolution. But this I must apprize you of, that unless you do the same to me, which you either have done, or mean to do to Guiscard, my own hands shall do it for you. Leave tears then to women; and if you mean to act with severity, cut us off both together, if it appear to you that we have deserved it."

The prince knew full well the greatness of his daughter's soul; yet he could by no means persuade himself, that she would have resolution enough to do what her words seemed to threaten. Dismissing, then, all thoughts of doing her hurt in person, and intending to wean her affection from her lover by taking him off, he gave orders to the two men, who guarded Guiscard, to strangle him privately in the night, and to take his heart out of his body, and bring it to him. They executed his commands, and the next day Tancred called for a golden cup, and putting the heart into it, he had it conveyed by a trusty servant to his daughter, with this message: "Your father sends this present to comfort you with what was most dear to you; even as he was comforted by you in what was most dear to him." She had remained unshaken in her resolution since her father left her, and therefore had prepared the juices of some poisonous plants, which she had mixed with water, to be at hand if what she feared should come to pass. When the servant had delivered the present, and the message, she took the cup, without changing countenance, and seeing the heart therein, and knowing by the servant's words that it must be Guiscard's, she looked steadfastly at the man, and said, "My father has done very wisely; such a heart as this requires no worse a sepulchre than one of gold." Then she lifted it to her

mouth and kissed it, saying: "All my life long, even to this last period of it, have I found my father's love most abundant towards me; but now, more than ever: therefore return him in my name the last thanks that I shall ever be able to give him for such a present." Looking then towards the cup, which she held fast in her hand, she said: "Alas! dearest end and centre of all my wishes! Cursed be the cruelty of him, by whom these eyes now see you; although my soul hath long viewed and known you. You have finished your course; such a one indeed as fortune has thought fit to allot you; you are arrived at the goal to which we all tend; you have left the miseries of this world far behind, and have obtained such a sepulchre from your very enemy, as your merit required. Nothing remained to make your obsequies complete, but the tears of her who was so dear to you whilst you were living; and which, that you should not now want, Heaven put it into the mind of my relentless father to send you to me. And you shall have them, though I had purposed to die unmoved, and without shedding a tear; and when I have done, I will instantly join my soul to yours; for in what other company can I go better and safer to those unknown regions, where, I doubt not, your soul is now expecting mine." When she had done speaking, she shed a flood of tears, kissing the heart a thousand times; whilst the damsels who were about her knew neither what heart it was, nor what her words imported; but being moved with pity they joined with her, begging to know the cause of her grief, and endeavouring all they could to comfort her.

After she had lamented as long as she thought fit, she raised up her head, and wiping her eyes, said, "Thou heart most dearly beloved! All my duty is now performed towards thee; nothing more remains, but for my soul to accompany thine." Upon this she bade them reach the vessel of water, which she had prepared the day before, and pouring it into the cup with the heart, which she had sufficiently washed with her tears, she drank it all off without the least dread or apprehension, and threw herself upon the bed with the cup in her hand, composing her body as decently as she could, and pressing her lover's heart to hers, she lay without uttering a word more, expecting death.

The maids, when they saw this, though they knew not what it was she had drunk, sent to acquaint Tancred, who, fearing what had really happened, came into the room soon after she had laid herself down, and finding it was too late,

began to lament most grievously. "Sir," she said to him, "save those tears against worse fortune that may happen, for I want them not. Who but yourself would mourn for a thing of your own doing? But if any part of that love now remain in you, which you once had for me, the last request I shall make is, that since you would not suffer us to be happy together whilst living, our two bodies (wherever you have disposed of his) may be publicly interred together when dead." Extreme grief would not suffer the prince to reply. Presently finding herself drawing near her end, she strained the heart strongly to her breast, saying, "Receive us, Heaven, I die!" Then closing her eyes, all sense forsook her, and she departed this miserable life. Such an end had the amours of Guiscard and Ghismond, as you have now heard; and the prince, repenting of his cruelty when it was too late, had them buried in one grave in the most public manner, amid the general grief of all the people of Salerno.

[No tale of Boccaccio has been so often translated and imitated as this one. It was translated into Latin prose, by Leonard Aretine; into Latin elegiac verse, by Filippo Beroald, the commentator on Apuleius; and into Italian ottava rima, by Annibal Guasco de Alessandrus. It forms the subject of not fewer than five Italian tragedies; one of which, 'La Ghismonda,' obtained a momentary fame by being falsely attributed, by its real author, to Torquato Tasso. An English drama, by Robert Wilmot, which is also founded on this story, was acted before Queen Elizabeth, at the Inner Temple, in 1568 (Dodley's 'Collection of Old Plays,' vol. ii). The story appeared in French verse, by Jean Fleury; and in the English octave stanza, by William Walter, a poet of the reign of Henry VII. In this country it is best known by the 'Sigismunda and Guiscardo' of Dryden. The old English ballad of 'Sir Cauline and the Daughter of the King of Ireland,' has a strong resemblance to this ballad of Boccaccio, in the secret meeting of the lovers, and the discovery of their transgression; the catastrophe, however, is entirely different. The fine arts have also added lustre and celebrity to the tale. There is a beautiful painting attributed to Correggio, in which Sigismunda is represented weeping over the heart of her lover. It was this picture that Hogarth tried to copy and rival, an attempt for which he was severely ridiculed. "The 'Sigismunda' of Hogarth," says Horace Walpole, "is the representation of a maudlin strumpet, just turned out of keeping, with eyes red with rage, tearing off the ornaments her keeper had given her." See also Churchill's 'Epistle to Hogarth.']

NOVEL II.

Friar Albert makes a woman believe that an angel is in love with her, and in that shape deceives her. Afterwards, for fear of her relations, he throws himself out of the window, and takes shelter in a poor man's house, who exposes him the next day in the public market-place, in the form of a wild man, when he is discovered by two friars, and put into prison.

THE story related by Fiammetta drew tears several times from the eyes of all the company; but it being now finished, the king, looking gravely, said, "I would have given my life willingly to have enjoyed but half the pleasure which those lovers met with. Nor need you wonder at that, because I undergo a thousand deaths daily, without the least pleasure whatever in return. But, letting my fortune alone for the present, it is my will that Pampinea proceed; who, if she goes on as well as Fiammetta has begun, I shall expect to receive some small degree of comfort more to my affliction." Pampinea, finding herself fixed upon for the next novel, and having more regard to the inclination of the company, which she very well knew, than to the king's command, and being more desirous of diverting them than of satisfying his melancholy temper, chose a novel which should make them laugh, though she still kept to the subject proposed:—It is a common saying, said she, that a wicked man, who has the reputation of being virtuous and good, may do many things, and nobody believe it. This affords ample matter for discourse, and a fit handle for me to shew how great the hypocrisy is of some of the religious, who have their garments long and large; their faces made pale artificially, and on purpose; their language so meek and humble, to get men's goods from them; yet are sour and harsh enough in reproving them of vices, of which they themselves are guilty; whilst they pretend that they merit heaven just as much by receiving, as the others do by giving. Who also, not as if they were to get thither by their own endeavours, but as though they were the possessors and lords of it, portion out to every person that dies, a better or a worse place therein, according to the amount of money bequeathed to them; thus deceiving themselves, in the first place, if they really mean what they say, and afterwards those who put their trust in them. Of whom, might I have the liberty of speaking all I know, I could quickly disclose to many simple

people, what wickedness is too often concealed under that holy habit. I could wish, however, that the same success might attend the hypocrisy of them all, as befell a certain friar, who was concerned in some of the best families in Venice; the relation of which may prove some diversion to you, after your grief for the death of Ghismond.

There lived at Imola a man of a very bad life, called Berto della Massa, whose evil deeds had gained him such a character there, that nobody could believe him even when he spoke the truth. Finding, therefore, that all his quirks and cunning would stand him in no further stead at Imola, he removed, in a kind of despair, to Venice, the common receptacle of every sort of wickedness, and resolved to manage matters in a quite different manner from what he had done: and, as if he felt some remorse of conscience for his past life, pretending also to be seized with uncommon zeal and devotion, he turned friar, calling himself Father Albert of Imola. In this habit he seemed to lead a mighty sanctified life, highly commending penance and abstinence, and eating no flesh and drinking no wine; but then it was when he could get neither to please him. Besides this, when he was officiating at the altar at any time, if he saw he was taken notice of by many people, he would be sure to weep over our Saviour's passion, having tears enough at command whenever he chose. In short, what with his preaching and crying together, he had so far insinuated himself into the good graces of the people of Venice, that there was scarcely a will made but he was left executor; he had the care also and disposal of many people's money; and was adviser and confessor to the greatest part both of the men and women; so that from a wolf he became the shepherd, and the fame of his sanctity was greater than ever was that of St. Francis

Now it happened, that a vain simple lady, named Lissetta da Ca Quirino, wife to a merchant, who was gone a voyage to Flanders, came one day, with some other women, to confess to this holy friar: and being asked, as she was confessing, if she had a lover? she replied, putting on an angry countenance, "What! father, have you no eyes in your head? Where do you see a woman so handsome as myself? I could have lovers enough; but my beauty is designed for none of them; it is fit only to appear in heaven itself." And many more things she said of the same sort, enough to give any one a surfeit to hear them. Father Albert immediately saw her blind side and thought her fit game for his net, but

deferred using any flattering speeches till a more convenient opportunity: to shew himself, however, holy for that time, he began to reprove her, telling her all this was vain-glory, and so forth. The lady, in return, called him a brute, and told him he could not distinguish beauty when he saw it. He then, not to provoke her too far, took her confession, and dismissed her.

A little time after, taking a friend with him whom he could trust to the house, he went with her to one side of the hall, where nobody could see them, and falling down upon his knees, said, "Madam, I must beg, for Heaven's sake, that you will forgive me for blaspheming your beauty, as I did last Sunday; since I was so chastised the following night for it, that I could not rise out of my bed before to-day."—"And who," quoth the foolish lady, "chastised you in that manner?"—"I will tell you. As I was saying my prayers that night, as usual, suddenly a great light shone around me. I turned about to see what it was, and beheld a beautiful youth, with a staff in his hand, who took hold of my hood, threw me down upon the floor, and beat me in such a manner, that I was almost killed. Upon my asking what all that was for? he made answer, 'Because thou didst so saucily presume to reprove the celestial beauty of Madam Lisetta, whom I love above all things in the world,'—'And who are you?' I demanded. 'I am the angel Gabriel,' he replied. 'O, my Lord,' then said I, 'I beseech you to forgive me.' He answered, 'I do forgive thee, upon condition that thou goest the very first opportunity to her, and obtain her pardon: and unless she thinks fit to excuse thee, I shall return, and give thee such discipline as thou shalt feel as long as thou shalt live.' What he said more I dare not speak, unless I have your forgiveness."

My lady windbag, who had something of a sweet tooth in her head, gave ear to this ridiculous story, and said, "I told you, Father Albert, that my beauties were of the celestial kind; I am sorry for what you have suffered, and forgive you, if you will tell me truly what the angel said besides."—"That I will," said he; "but one thing I must enjoin you, namely, that you tell it to no person living, unless you have a mind to ruin all; for you are certainly the happiest woman upon the face of the earth. This angel Gabriel told me, then, that he had such a regard for you, that he should frequently have come to pass the night with you, if he thought you would not be too much terrified. He bid me tell you, there-

fore, that he should come some night, and stay a while with you; and seeing that he is an angel, and that you could not touch him if he were to come in that shape, he will put on a human appearance for your sake, and would know from you when you would choose to see him, and whose form and person you would have him assume." The conceited woman said she was very happy to hear that the angel Gabriel loved her, for indeed she loved him, and never failed to set up a full candle wherever she saw him painted. At any hour he might please to come he should be welcome, and would find her alone in her chamber: but on this condition, that he should not forsake her for the Virgin Mary, of whom it was said he was very fond; and, indeed, so it appeared, for he was everywhere to be seen on his knees before her. Furthermore, he might come in any form he pleased, provided he did not frighten her. "Madam," said the friar, "you talk very sensibly, and I will arrange with him as you desire; but I have a great favour to beg, which will cost you nothing; it is that he may put on my person. I will tell you why I ask this. It is because he will take my soul out of my body and put it in paradise, and will enter into me; and as long as he is with you, so long will my soul be in paradise." "I consent with all my heart," answered she; "it will be some amends for the blows you have received."—"But," said he, "the door must be open, otherwise, as he comes in human shape, he would not be able to enter your house." She promised it should be done. Friar Albert then took leave of her, and she remained in such a transcendant state of exaltation, that she did not know which way her sitting parts hung, and thought every moment a year till the angel Gabriel should come to her.

By way of preparation for the part he had to play that night, Friar Albert fortified himself with provocatives and lots of good things; and, when it was dark, he went with a companion to the house of a woman, who used to accommodate him when he had such affairs on hand. Having there put on his angelic accoutrements, he went to the lady's house, found the door on the latch, and stepped up into her chamber. When Lisetta beheld that shining white apparition, she knelt down before it; the angel gave her his benediction, raised her from the ground, and made a sign to her to go to bed. She obeyed with cheerful alacrity, and the angel lay down beside his votary. Friar Albert was a fine lively fellow; Lisetta was a dainty bit of flesh; and he soon let her

know the difference between an angelic bedfellow and her husband. Many a flight he took that night without wings; the lady fairly screamed with delight; and between whiles he told her many things of the glories of heaven. Just before daybreak he went away as he had come, after making arrangements for his return, and rejoined his comrade, whom the good woman had kindly taken into her own bed lest he should be frightened if he lay alone.

As soon as Lisetta had dined, she set off with her companion to see Friar Albert, and told him all about the angel Gabriel, what she had heard from him about the glories of heaven, how he was made, and a thousand marvellous stories of her own invention. "I don't know, madam," replied the friar, "how you fared with him; but well I know that after he came to me last night, and I gave him your message, he suddenly transported my soul into a place of such exquisite pleasure as never was known, where it remained till this morning; as for my body I know not what became of it."—"Don't I tell you!" said Lisetta; "your body lay all night in my arms with the angel Gabriel; and if you will not believe me, look under your left breast where I gave the angel —oh! such a kiss, that you'll bear the marks of it for some days to come."—"Well," said the friar, "I will do what I have not done for a long time past, that is, strip myself and see if what you say is true." After much more talk of this kind, Madam Lisetta went home; and the angelic Franciscan continued his visits to her for a long time without impediment; but at last her silly babble spoiled all.

One day it chanced that, being with an acquaintance, the conversation turned on female beauty, and Lisetta to exalt herself above all others, must needs say, "If you but knew what a conquest I have made, you would say no more about other women." Her friend, who was eager to draw her out, replied, "That may be very true; and yet anybody but myself might hesitate to believe it, not knowing who is the person in question."—"I ought not to name him," said the vain creature, "but as I have no secrets from you, I will tell you that it is the angel Gabriel; and he loves me better than himself, as the finest woman to be found, so he tells me, in the whole world or within the lagoons." The friend could hardly help laughing out, but refrained that she might hear more. "By my faith, my dear," she said, "if the angel Gabriel is your lover, and told you this, of course he knows best; but I had no idea that angels did such things."—"You

were mistaken, my dear, I give you my word my husband's but a fool to him; and he tells me that they make love in heaven just the same as here, but he fell in love with me because there is none equal to me up there; nay, he comes down very often to be with me; what do you say to that?"

It seemed an age to the friend till she could get away from Lisetta and have her fill of laughter. In the evening she had a bevy of ladies at an entertainment, and told them the whole story. They, again, told it to their husbands and to other ladies, and these to more, so that in less than two days it was known all over Venice. Lisetta's brothers-in-law heard of it amongst the rest, and without saying a word to her on the subject, they kept watch for several nights together to discover this angel and see if he could fly. Some inkling of the matter also reached the ears of Friar Albert, and one night he went to reprimand her for making it public, but had no sooner got into the apartment, and stripped himself, than he heard the brothers-in-law at the door. Jumping up at once, and seeing no other way to escape, he opened the casement that was over the great canal, and threw himself directly into it. As the water was deep, and he was a good swimmer, he received no harm: and espying a house on the other side, with the door open, he rushed into it, and entreated the honest man to save his life, telling him a thousand lies concerning the reason of his coming there in that manner, and at that time. The man, being moved with pity, and having some business which called him away for a time, desired him to go into his bed, and lie there till he should return; he then locked him up in the house, and went about his business. The brothers-in-law, upon coming into the lady's chamber, found that the angel Gabriel had left his wings there, and flown away without them. They gave her, therefore, a tremendous rating, and left her disconsolate, carrying off the angel's implements along with them.

In the mean time, the sun having risen, the man had repaired to the Rialto, where he heard the whole story how the Angel Gabriel had been to spend the night with Madonna Lisetta, and how he was discovered by her relations, and forced to leap into the canal, and nobody knew what was become of him; whence the cottager concluded it must be the same man that he had safe and fast at home. Finding, upon his return, that this was the fact, after some discourse together he made the friar send home for five

hundred ducats, threatening otherwise to deliver him up to the woman's friends. When the money was brought, and the friar was desirous of getting away, the honest man said to him, "I see no way for your escape but one. To-day we make a great rejoicing, when one person is to bring a man clothed like a bear, another like a wild man, and so on; and in that manner people are to come under different disguises into St. Mark's Place, as to a hunt; and when the diversion is over, every man leads away the person that he brings, to what quarter he pleases. Now, if, before any one knows that you are here, you will consent to be led in one of these disguises, I will carry you afterwards where you will; otherwise I do not see how you can get away without being observed; for the relations, guessing that you are somewhere hereabouts, are everywhere upon the scout for you." This seemed a hard sentence to the friar; but his fear of being discovered was so great, that he at last consented. Accordingly he was besmeared all over with honey, and covered with feathers; a chain was put about his neck, and a mask upon his face, with a great stick in one hand, and a couple of butcher's mastiffs in the other; and a man was privily sent before to the Rialto, to make public proclamation, that all who had a mind to see the angel so much talked of, might repair to St. Mark's Place: which was a Venetian trick at best.

When that was done, Father Albert was led forth, and all the way as he was carried along, there was a great outcry of the people, wondering what thing it was: and being brought into the great square, what with the people that followed, and those that flocked thither, upon hearing the proclamation, the crowd was immensely great. The fellow then tied his wild man to a pillar, pretending to wait till the sport began; in the meantime, as he was bedaubed with honey, the flies and wasps began to grow exceedingly troublesome to him. Perceiving, at last, the square sufficiently crowded, under a pretence of turning his wild man loose, the man took off the mask, and said, "Gentlemen, as I find we are to have no other sport to-day, I intend to show you the angel who comes down from heaven o'nights to comfort the Venetian ladies." No sooner was the mask removed, than all present recognized Father Albert, and there was a most terrible outcry against him, every one pelting him with whatever filth came to their hands, till at length the news reached the convent, when two of his brethren came, and, throwing

a gown over him, carried him away with the utmost difficulty to their monastery, where he was thrown into prison, and ended his days in a miserable manner. Thus did this man's hypocrisy and wickedness meet with their due reward; and may the like fate attend all his kind.

[The numerous tales founded on that species of seduction practised by Alberto da Imola, may have originated in the incident related in all the romances concerning Alexander the Great, where Nectanebus predicts to Olympias that she is destined to have a son by Ammon, and afterwards enjoys the queen under the appearance of that divinity. But they have more probably been derived from the story related by Josephus (lib. xviii, c. xiii), of Mundus, a Roman knight in the reign of Tiberius, who having fallen in love with Paulina, wife of Saturninus, bribed a priestess of Isis, to whose worship Paulina was addicted, to inform her that the god Anabis, being enamoured of her charms, had desired her to come to him. In the evening she accordingly proceeded to the temple, where she was met by Mundus, who personated the Egyptian divinity. Next morning she boasted of her interview with Anabis to all her acquaintance, who suspected some trick of priestcraft; and the deceit having come to the knowledge of Tiberius, he ordered the temple of Isis to be demolished, and her priests to be crucified. Similar deceptions are also common in eastern stories. Thus, in the History of Malek, in the 'Persian Tales,' the adventurer of that name, under the semblance of Mahomet, seduces the Princess of Gazna. A fraud of the nature of that employed by Alberto da Imola is frequent in the French novels and romances, as in 'L'Amant Salamandre,' and the 'Sylph Husband,' of Marmontel. It is also said to have been oftener than once practised in France, in real life, as appears from the well-known case of Father Girard and Mlle. Cadière.]

NOVEL III.

Three young men fall in love with three sisters, and fly with them into Crete. The eldest destroys her lover out of jealousy; and the second, by consenting to the Duke of Crete's desires, is the means of saving her sister's life: afterwards her lover kills her, and goes away with the eldest sister. The third couple is charged with her death, which they confess, then bribe their keepers, make their escape, and die at Rhodes at last in great misery.

When Filostrato heard the conclusion of Pampinea's novel, he stood some time in suspense, and at last, turning towards her, said, "There was something good in the end of

your story, but the beginning was much too ludicrous." Then, pointing to Lauretta, he added, "Do you go on with a better if you can." She replied, with a smile, "You are too hard upon poor lovers, to desire that their affairs should end unfortunately. Nevertheless, I shall, in compliance with your orders, give an account of three persons who were equally unhappy that way; and thus I proceed:—Every vice, as you very well know, may turn not only to the disadvantage of such as are subject to it, but of others also: and of all vices anger is that which hurries us along most blindly to our ruin. Now this passion seems to be a sudden and rash emotion, raised in us by an injury received; which, driving away all sense and reason, and veiling the eyes of our understanding, kindles in our souls a most violent fury. And whereas men are governed by it too often, though some more than others, yet it is of worse consequence in women, as it is more easily kindled in them, and burns also with a more fierce and lasting flame. Nor is this to be wondered at; for fire, in its own nature, is apt to take hold the soonest of such things as are of the lightest consistence; and our texture, we know, is much more delicate than that of men. Seeing, therefore, how prone we are to it naturally; considering, also, that nothing can recommend us more to the good esteem of the men, with whom we are to spend our lives, than mildness and good nature; and, on the contrary, that anger is attended with infinite danger and trouble; I shall, for your greater defence and security in this respect, relate the loves of three young men, and as many ladies, who all became miserable, through the fury of one.

Marseilles, you know, is an ancient and famous city in Provence, situated on the sea-coast, and was better stored formerly with rich citizens and wealthy merchants than it is at present. Amongst these was Narnald Claude, a man of low birth but fair character, and immensely rich, who, besides his other children, had three daughters; the two eldest, who were twins, were about fifteen years of age, and the other fourteen; and there was nothing wanting to the disposing of all three in marriage but the return of their father, who was gone on a trading voyage to Spain. The names of the two elder were Ninetta and Magdalena, and of the younger Bertella. Now there was a worthy young gentleman, but of small fortune, named Restagnone, in love with Ninetta, and she having the same inclination for him, their mutual wishes were soon consummated, and the affair was carried on for

some time between them, without any body's knowing anything of the matter. In the meantime, two other young gentlemen, who were both rich, their fathers being just dead, fell in love with the other two sisters; the one whose name was Folco, having made choice of Magdalena, and the other, called Ughetto, of Bertella. Restagnone being apprized of this by Ninetta, contrived a way to make up his want of wealth by their love. Having cultivated an intimacy with them by accompanying them, sometimes singly, sometimes both together, to see their mistresses and his own, he took occasion one day to invite them to his house, where he spoke to them in this manner: "Gentlemen, our acquaintance for some time past may have convinced you of the great esteem I have for you, so as to have your interests at heart equally with my own; I shall now acquaint you, therefore, with a thought which has just come into my mind, and you may do afterwards as you shall think proper. It plainly appears that you have the utmost regard and value for the two young ladies, and I have the same for the third sister. I think, if you will consent to it, that I have found out an expedient agreeable enough, which is as follows: you are both very rich, and I am otherwise; make then one joint stock, and let me come in a partner with you; resolve on what part of the world we shall go to, to live happily together, and I will undertake that the three sisters shall bear us company, with a good part of their father's wealth; so that every one of us may have his mistress, and we live like brethren together, the happiest men on earth. What say you to this?"

The young gentlemen were so much in love, that they gave themselves very little time to reflect upon what was proposed; but declared, that, happen what would, they were ready to comply. Restagnone accordingly took the first opportunity that offered of being with Ninetta, which was no easy matter to compass, when he made the same proposal to her, enforcing it by divers reasons, which he might have spared, because the scheme was entirely to her liking. She told him, therefore, that she consented for her own part, and would persuade her sisters; and that, in the meantime, he should get everything in readiness for such an expedition. He returned then to his two friends, who were impatient to know the result, and told them that everything was in readiness on the part of the ladies. Proposing to go to Crete, they sold all their estates under pretence of turning merchants, and bought a light frigate, which they armed and

victualled with great secrecy against the time appointed. In the meantime, Ninetta, who was no stranger to her sisters' inclinations, had wrought so far upon them by her fine persuasions, that they longed for nothing so much as their departure. The night being come, therefore, when they were to embark, the three ladies opened their father's cabinet, and took out a great quantity of money and jewels, with which they stole away to meet their lovers, who were waiting for them at the place appointed, when they immediately set sail, and made no stop anywhere till they came to Genoa the next night, where they consummated their several nuptials. Thence they sailed from port to port, till in eight days they arrived at Crete, where they purchased estates and fine houses, and lived like noblemen, keeping great numbers of servants, horses, dogs, etc., for their diversion; so that none seemed to enjoy more real pleasure and satisfaction than themselves.

Passing their time away in this manner, it happened (as it happens every day, that things, however coveted by us, nauseate by over great plenty), that Restagnone, who had an ardent affection for Ninetta before she was in his power, began now to be much more cool in this respect; for, being at a feast one day, he met with a lady, with whom he became violently in love, and he began to give treats and entertainments for her sake, till his wife grew so jealous that he could never stir a step but she took notice of it, and expressed the utmost uneasiness both in her words and behaviour to him on that account. But as plenty always cloys, and as to have what we want denied us whets the appetite, so did this vexation of hers increase the flame of his love. Whether it was that he had really accomplished his desires or not, Ninetta, whoever told her so, believed it: and she consequently fell into such a fit of sorrow and fury that her love for her husband was exchanged into the most inveterate hatred; and she resolved to revenge the wrong she had sustained by his death. Meeting, then, with an old Grecian woman, who was skilled in all sorts of poisons, she engaged her, by presents and large promises, to prepare a deadly water, which she gave him without hesitation, one evening when he was very thirsty; and its virulence was such, that he died before morning. Folco and Ughetto, with their wives, knowing nothing of Restagnone's dying of poison, lamented over him very much along with Ninetta, who had him honourably buried.

But not many days afterwards the old woman was taken up for some other crime, when she confessed this one among others. Thereupon the Duke of Crete, without saying a word to any person concerning it, had Folco's palace beset one night, and Ninetta brought quietly away a prisoner; and she, without being tortured, confessed the cause of Restagnone's death. The duke privately acquainted Folco and Ughetto with the cause of Ninetta's arrest, and they used all their interest with him to prevent her being burnt, which they understood was likely to be her sentence, but all to no purpose; the duke seemed determined to have justice done. Hereupon Magdalena, a very beautiful lady, and whom the duke had long conceived an affection for, though hitherto to no purpose, supposing now, that by obliging him she might save her sister's life, sent privately to let him know that she would now comply with his entreaties, upon two conditions: the one was, that her sister should be liberated; and the other, that the whole should be kept secret. The duke liked the message, and agreed to what was proposed; wherefore, keeping Folco and Ughetto prisoners, one night by her consent, as if he wanted some further information, he went privately to Magdalena. He had previously given out that he had caused Ninetta to be put into a sack, and thrown into the sea, and now he took her along with him to the sister, to whom he gave her up, according to their agreement, and charged Magdalena to send her out of the way, to prevent all blame and censure, and lest he should be compelled to proceed with rigour against her.

The next morning Folco and Ughetto were told that their sister was put to death, and being released, went home to comfort their wives for the loss of her. Magdalena endeavoured, as much as possible, to keep her concealed, yet Folco had some suspicion that she was in the house, and was at last convinced of it, which occasioned him some jealousy, as he knew the duke's regard for his wife: therefore he asked her, how it happened that Ninetta was there? She then began a long story, to which he gave but little credit, and forced her at last to confess the whole truth. Upon which, being provoked to the last degree, he drew his sword, and stabbed her to the heart, she begging in vain for mercy. Fearing, afterwards, the duke's resentment, he went into the room to Ninetta, and said cheerfully to her, "Let us go away directly, according to your sister's appointment, for fear you should fall into the hands of the duke." She was desirous

of getting away, and accordingly, without taking any leave of her sister, went off in great haste along with him. He took only what money was at hand, which was but little; the two went on shipboard together, and it was never known whither they were carried. Magdalena being found dead the next day, some persons, out of ill-will to Ughetto, carried the news instantly to the duke, who came in all haste to the house, as he had an excessive love for her, and seized upon Ughetto and his lady, and put them to the rack, by which means he made them confess what they were entire strangers to; namely that they were equally concerned in her death with their brother, who was fled. After this, finding that there was no other prospect of saving their lives, they bribed their keepers with a large sum of money, which they always had in readiness for any extraordinary occasion, and went immediately on board a ship, without being able to take any of their effects, and fled to Rhodes, where they died some time after in great distress and poverty. To such an end did the foolish love of Restagnone and the ungoverned fury of Ninetta bring both themselves and others.

NOVEL IV.

Gerbino, contrary to a treaty made by King William, his grandfather, fought with a ship belonging to the King of Tunis, with a design to take away his daughter; who being slain by the ship's crew, he slew them likewise, and was afterwards beheaded for it.

LAURETTA had now concluded her novel, when the company expressed their different opinions concerning the fate of these unhappy lovers; this person saying one thing, and that another, till at length the king, raising up his head, as if from a profound study, made the next signal to Eliza, who began as follows:—There are many people who are persuaded that love is only kindled at the eyes, and laugh at those who maintain the possibility of people's being enamoured by report; but how far they are mistaken will be seen in the following story; wherein will be shown, not only the power of fame in that respect, but that it has brought divers persons also to a miserable death.

Guiglielmo, the second king of Sicily (as their histories relate) had two children, a son named Ruggieri, and a daughter called Constantia. Ruggieri died before his father, leav-

ing a son, called Gerbino, whom his grandfather took care to bring up, and he became a most accomplished prince; nor did his fame confine itself within the bounds of his own country, but was echoed through numerous parts of the world, especially in Barbary, which was then tributary to the King of Sicily. Amongst others, who had heard of his singular worth and character, was a daughter of the King of Tunis, who, in the opinion of all that ever saw her, was as beautiful a woman as ever lived, with a soul equally noble and perfect. The lady, inquiring always after people of worth, received from all hands a most extraordinary account of Gerbino's merit and noble exploits, which were so pleasing to her, that, conceiving within her own mind the idea of his person, she became violently in love, and was never more pleased than when he was the subject of discourse. On the other hand, no less had her fame reached Sicily, as well as other countries, and was particularly agreeable to the prince, who had conceived the same love for her. Being desirous above all things of seeing her, he charged some of his friends, till he could obtain leave from his grandfather to go himself to Tunis, to make his love known privately to her, in the best manner they were able, and to bring him some tidings concerning her. This was managed very dexterously by one of them, who went under the character of a jeweller. The princess received him with great cheerfulness and satisfaction, declaring a mutual regard for the prince, and as a proof of it, she sent him a present of one of her richest jewels. He received it with great joy, and wrote several letters, presenting her with things of great value, and pledging himself to wait upon her in person, when fortune afforded him an opportunity.

Things being carried so far, and farther than ought to have been, it happened, that the princess's father promised her in marriage to the King of Granada, to her infinite sorrow, and could she have found opportunity, she would gladly have fled from her father to the prince. He, in like manner, hearing of this contract, was afflicted beyond measure, and resolved, if it should happen that she was sent by sea, to take her away by force. The King of Tunis hearing something of Gerbino's love, and what he designed, and well knowing his resolution and great valour, when the time came that she was to depart, sent to the King of Sicily to acquaint him with his design, and to desire a safe conduct; and that monarch, knowing nothing of his grandson's affections towards the lady,

nor thinking that the safe conduct was desired upon that account, readily granted it, in token whereof he sent one of his gloves to the King of Tunis. The latter then fitted out a stately ship at Carthage, and providing it with everything necessary to transport his daughter to Granada, waited only for the time that had been appointed. The young lady, who was aware of all this, sent one of her servants in secret to Palermo, to acquaint the prince that she was to sail in a few days, and that it would now appear whether he was a person of such valour as had been always reported, or had that love for her which he had often declared. The message was faithfully delivered; and the prince knowing, at the same time, that his grandfather had granted a safe conduct, was at a loss how to act; but reflecting upon the lady's words, and that he might not appear a dastard, he hired two light ships at Messina, which he took care to have well manned, and sailed with them to the coast of Sardinia, expecting that the ship which had his mistress on board must take that course. In a few days that expectation was answered, and he saw the ship sailing with a light wind near the place where he was stationed. Thereupon he thus addressed his companions:

"Gentlemen, if you are the men I take you to be, there is none of you, I imagine, but must have felt the extraordinary power of love, without which, as I judge by myself, there can be no valour or worth in mortal. If then you have ever been, or are now in love, you will the more easily comprehend the nature of my design. It is love that makes me call upon you; and the object of it is in the ship before you. Besides that, there is store of riches, which, if you fight manfully, you may easily obtain. For my part I desire nothing but the lady, for whose sake I have taken up arms; everything else shall be yours. Let us go then boldly to the attack; fortune seems to favour our undertaking; they lie still, unable to get along for want of wind."

The prince had no occasion to make use of such an exhortation; for his people, eager for rapine, were ready enough to his orders. They declared their approbation then with a great shout, whilst the trumpets sounded, and they all armed themselves, and rowed towards the ship. In like manner the other ship's crew, seeing two galleys come towards them, and that there was no possibility of escaping by flight, stood resolutely upon their defence. The prince being come sufficiently near, ordered that the masters of the vessel

should come on board, unless they meant to fight. The Saracens understanding who the assailants were, and what their demand was, told them, that it was contrary to treaty, to the royal faith plighted to them, in token of which they showed king Guiglielmo's glove; and they flatly declared, that they would neither surrender themselves, nor part with anything in the ship till they were forced to do so. The prince, now seeing the lady upon deck, whose charms exceeded all he had dreamed of them, replied, "Show your glove to your hawks when you fly them, it is of no use here; either deliver up the lady, or prepare for fight." Then they began slinging darts and stones on both sides; battering one another for a considerable time, to the great damage of both. At length, when the prince saw that little good was to be done that way, he took a small pinnace which he had brought with him from Sardinia, and setting it on fire, towed it with his two galleys alongside of the ship. The Saracens being now assured that they must either surrender or perish, had the lady brought from below, where she was all in tears; then they shouted to Gerbino, and murdered her before his face, whilst she begged in vain for mercy and help, and threw her into the sea, saying, "Take her, such as we now give her to thee: and such as thy breach of faith has deserved." He, seeing their cruelty, and not caring now what became of his own life, in spite of all the darts and stones that were thrown at him, came up close with the ship, and boarded her; and, as a famished lion, when he gets among a heard of cattle, gives a loose to his fury before he satisfies his hunger, so did the prince slay all that came in his way, whilst the fire getting a-head in the ship, he ordered the sailors to save what booty they were able for themselves, and returned to his galley little pleased with so dear a conquest. Afterwards, having recovered the lady's body out of the sea, and lamenting heartily over it, he returned to Sicily, and had it buried in Ustria, a little island over against Trapani, and then he came home the saddest man on earth.

The King of Tunis, upon hearing the news, sent ambassadors all in deep mourning to the King of Sicily, complaining of the breach of faith, and relating in what manner it had been done. Guiglielmo was much concerned at this, and seeing no way by which he could deny them the justice they demanded, he had his grandson seized, and notwithstanding the intercession of every one of his barons, ordered his nead to be struck off in his presence; choosing rather to be with-

out a grandson, than to be thought a king without honour. So miserable was the end of these two lovers within a few days of each other, without tasting the least fruit of their loves.

NOVEL V.

Isabella's brothers put her lover to death; he appears to her in a dream, and shows her where he is buried. She privately brings away his head, and, putting it into a pot of basil, and other sweet herbs, laments over it every day. At length they take it away from her, and she soon after dies of grief.

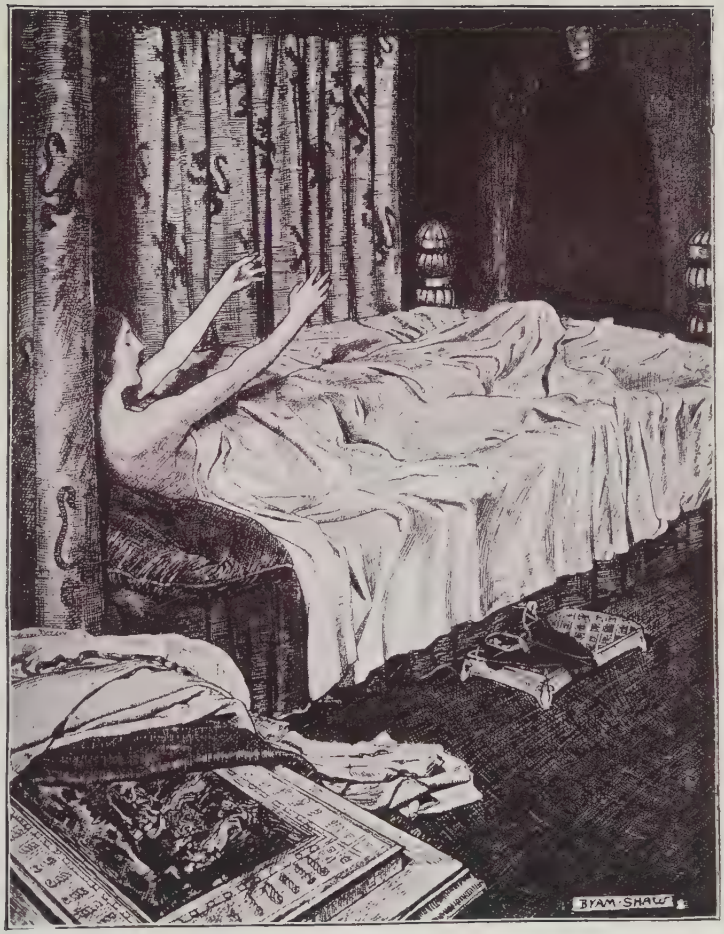
ELIZA having concluded her novel, which was commended by the king, Filomena was then ordered to begin. Full of pity for the two unhappy lovers last mentioned, she heaved a deep sigh, and said:—"My novel will not be concerning people of such high rank as those of whom Eliza has spoken, but perhaps it may be equally moving; and I am led to it from her mentioning Messina, where the thing happened.

There lived at Messina, three young merchants, who were brothers, and left very rich by their father: they had an only sister, named Isabella, a lady of worth and beauty, who, whatever was the reason, was yet unmarried. Now they had in their employ a young man of Pisa, called Lorenzo, who managed all their affairs. He was a young man of very agreeable person and manners, and being often in Isabella's company, she loved him, and he forsook all others for her sake; nor was it long before their mutual desires were consummated. This affair was carried on between them for a considerable time, without the least suspicion; till one night it happened, as Isabella was going to Lorenzo's chamber, that the eldest brother saw her, without her knowing it. This afflicted him greatly; yet, being a prudent man, he made no discovery, but lay considering with himself till morning, what course was best to take. He then related to his brothers what he had seen, with regard to their sister and Lorenzo, and, after a long debate, it was resolved to seem to take no notice of it for the present, but to make away with him privately, the first opportunity, that they might remove all cause of reproach both to their sister and themselves. Continuing in this resolution, they behaved with the same freedom and civility to Lorenzo as ever, till at length, under a pretence of going out of the city, upon a party of pleasure, they carried him along with them, and arriving at a

lonesome place, fit for their purpose, they slew him, unprepared as he was to make any defence, and buried him on the spot. Then, returning to Messina, they gave it out, that they had sent him on a journey of business, which was easily believed, because they frequently did so.

After some time, Isabella, thinking that Lorenzo made a long stay, began to inquire earnestly of her brothers concerning him, and this she did so often, that at last one of them said to her, "What have you to do with Lorenzo, that you are continually teazing us about him? If you inquire any more, you shall receive such an answer as you will by no means like." This grieved her exceedingly, and fearing, she knew not why, she remained without asking any more questions; yet all the night would she lament and complain of his long stay; and thus she spent her life in a tedious and anxious waiting for his return; till one night it happened, that, having wept herself to sleep, he appeared to her in a dream, all pale and ghastly, with his clothes rent in pieces, and she thought that he spoke to her thus: "My dearest Isabel, thou grievest incessantly for my absence, and art continually calling upon me; but know that I can return no more to thee, for the last day that thou sawest me, thy brothers put me to death." And, describing the place where they had buried him, he bade her call no more upon him, nor ever expect to see him again; and disappeared.

Isabella woke up, implicitly believing the vision, and wept bitterly. In the morning, not daring to say anything to her brothers, she resolved to go to the place mentioned in the dream, to be convinced of the reality. Accordingly, having leave to go a little way into the country, along with a companion of hers, who was acquainted with all her affairs, she went thither, and clearing the ground of the dried leaves, with which it was covered, she observed where the earth seemed to be lightest, and dug there. She had not searched far before she came to her lover's body, which she found in no degree wasted; this informed her of the truth of her vision, and she was in the utmost concern on that account; but, as that was not a fit place for lamentation, she would willingly have taken the corpse away with her, to give it a more decent interment; but, finding herself unable to do that, she cut off the head, which she put into a handkerchief, and, covering the trunk again with mould, she gave the head to her maid to carry, and returned home without being perceived. She then shut herself up in her chamber, and



ISABELLA, DREAMING, SEES LORENZO'S APPARITION

FOURTH DAY ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ NOVEL V

THE POT

OF

BASIL

lamented over her lover's head till she had washed it with her tears; and then she put it into a flower-pot, having folded it in a fine napkin, and covering it with earth, she planted sweet herbs therein, which she watered with nothing but rose or orange water, or else with her tears, accustoming herself to sit always before it, and devoting her whole heart unto it, as containing her dear Lorenzo.

The sweet herbs, what with her continual bathing, and the moisture arising from the putrefied head, flourished exceedingly, and sent forth a most agreeable odour. Continuing this manner of life, she was observed by some of the neighbours, and they related her conduct to her brothers, who had before remarked with surprise the decay of her beauty. Accordingly, they both reprimanded her for it, and, finding that ineffectual, stole the pot from her. She, perceiving that it was taken away, begged earnestly of them to restore it, which they refusing, she fell sick. The young men wondered much why she should have so great a fancy for it, and were resolved to see what it contained: turning out the earth, therefore, they saw the napkin, and in it the head, not so much consumed, but that, by the curled locks, they knew it to be Lorenzo's, which threw them into the utmost astonishment, and fearing lest it should be known, they buried it privately, and withdrew themselves thence to Naples. The young lady never ceased weeping, and calling for her pot of flowers, till she died: and thus terminated her unfortunate love. But, in some time afterwards, the thing became public, which gave rise to this song—

Most cruel and unkind was he,
That of my flowers deprived me, etc.

[Keats's beautiful poem, 'The Pot of Basil,' has made this story familiar to the English reader.]

NOVEL VI.

A young lady, named Andrevuola, is in love with Gabriotto; they relate to each other their dreams, and he falls down dead in her arms. As she and her maid are carrying him out, they are apprehended by the officers of justice; she relates how the affair happened, and afterwards, the magistrate would force her, but she resists; at length her father hears of it, and as her innocence is clear, has her set at liberty. From that period she grows weary of the world, and becomes a nun.

The ladies were all pleased with Filomena's novel, because they had often heard the song, but were unacquainted with

the reason of its being made. The king laid his next commands on Pamfilo, who began thus:—The dream in the preceding story puts me in mind of another, in which mention is made of two different dreams, that shewed what was to happen, as the last did what had already come to pass; and which were no sooner related than the effect as suddenly followed. You must know, then, that it is a general passion in all people to see many things in their sleep, which appear real at that time, and when we wake we judge some of them to be so, some to be barely probable, and others to be utterly false, many of which do yet come to pass. For this reason we see many persons pay the same regard to a dream, as they would do to anything which they saw whilst they were really awake; insomuch, that they find constant matter of joy or trouble therein, according to their different hopes or fears; on the contrary, there are others who will believe nothing of that kind, until they fall into the very danger of which they have been in that manner forewarned. Of these, I commend neither the one nor the other; for, as all dreams are not true, neither are they all false. That all are not true, we may each of us have frequently observed; and yet that all are not false, appears from Filomena's novel, and will be farther shown by mine. Therefore, I am of opinion, that in a virtuous life and a good cause you need regard no dream, so far as to forego any good intention; and, on the contrary, that in bad actions, although your dreams seem to be favourable, and to promise success, yet should you give no credit to these any more than to the others. But to proceed with my story.

In the city of Brescia there lived a gentleman, called Signor Negro da Ponte Carraro, who, besides his other children, had a daughter named Andrevuola, a young and beautiful lady. Now she had taken a fancy to a neighbour, whose name was Gabriotto, a man of mean extraction, but excellent qualities, as well as graceful person; and, by her maid's assistance, she had managed so, that he was not only made acquainted with it, but they had frequent interviews together in her father's garden, to the mutual satisfaction of both parties. And, that nothing but death should part their affection, they were privately married.

Continuing their meetings in this manner, it happened one night, that she dreamed they were in the garden together, and, as she had him in her arms, she thought she saw, arising out of his body, something black and frightful, the form of

which she could not well comprehend, which took him by force from her, and went with him under ground; and from that time she could neither see the one nor the other. This caused her the utmost distress, and glad she was, upon waking, to find it otherwise: yet she had some dread still upon her on account of the dream. The next night, therefore, on her husband's desiring to meet her, she endeavoured all she could to excuse herself: but seeing him resolute, and fearing to disoblige him, she received him as usual. After they had diverted themselves with gathering flowers, and had sat down by a fountain side, he inquired the reason why she would have prevented his coming that night. She then related her dream, and the apprehensions it had occasioned; which made him laugh, and tell her that it was a folly to mind dreams, which proceeded, for the most part, from the stomach being either too full, or too empty, and which we every day see to be of no significancy: "But," added he, "had I showed any regard to dreams, I should not have come here, not so much for the sake of yours, as one of my own last night, which was this: I thought I was hunting in a most delightful forest, and that I had taken a beautiful young hind, as white as snow, which in a little time became so tame that it never left me; and I, fearing I might lose it, put a collar of gold about its neck, which I held by a golden chain in my hand. Afterwards, as it couched down by me, with its head in my bosom, on a sudden came rushing upon us, but whence I could not imagine, a greyhound, as black as jet, apparently half starved, and monstrously ugly. At me it made full speed, thrust its snout into my bosom, on my left side, and griped me to my very heart, which I thought it tore away from me, and which gave me such pain, that I instantly awoke, clapped my hand on my side, to feel if anything was amiss; and could not help laughing afterwards at my own weakness for doing so. What can be said, then, in such cases? I have had as bad or worse dreams, and nothing ever happened to me: then let us think of something else."

The lady was still more dismayed at hearing this, but concealed her thoughts as much as possible, for fear of giving him uneasiness; yet every now and then would she cast her eye down the garden, to see if anything monstrous appeared. At length her husband, fetching a deep sigh, embraced her, and said, "Alas, my life, help me, I am dying!" and, having said that, he fell upon the ground. She immediately drew

him into her lap, and weeping, said, "My dearest love, what is it that you feel?" He made no answer, but gasping vehemently, and perspiring inordinately, he soon expired. It is easy to conceive how grievous this was to the lady, who loved him more than her own life. She called upon him by name, over and over again, and wept for a considerable time; but, seeing that he was certainly dead, and not knowing what to do, she ran, all in tears, to call her maid, who had been intrusted with the secret, and, after they had lamented over him for some time together, she said to her—"Since Heaven has taken away my love from me I mean to live no longer myself; but, before I put my design into execution, I would take the most effectual means to preserve my honour, by concealing the affection that has existed between us; I desire then to have this body first interred, whose dear soul is now departed." "My dear lady," the maid replied, "do no talk of destroying yourself; for, by doing an act of that kind, you will lose him in the other world also: a soul like his must be happy, and you would send yours to endless misery: you had better compose yourself, and think how you may be of service, by offering up some few prayers in his behalf, if by chance he should stand in need of them, for any sin he may have committed. With regard to his interment, that may easily be done in this garden, because it was never known that he came hither; or, if you will not agree to that, we will carry him out, and leave him there: he will be found in the morning, and conveyed home, when his relations will take care to bury him." The lady, though she was overwhelmed with grief, listened attentively to the maid's advice; and not approving of the former part of it, she said, with regard to the latter, "Heaven forbid that I should ever suffer a youth so dearly beloved by me, and my husband too, either to be buried like a dog, or left in the street: he has had my prayers, and shall have those of his friends and relations. I am now resolved what to do." And immediately she sent the maid for a piece of rich silk she had in her cabinet, which being brought, she spread it upon the ground, and they laid the body upon it, with the head on a pillow; and closing his eyes and mouth, with abundance of tears, putting a garland of roses on his head, and strewing others over his body, she said to her maid, "It is not far to his house, whither we can easily carry him, as he now is, and we will lay him before the door; it will soon be day, and then he will be

found; and though it will be a sad sight to his friends, to me, in whose arms he died, it will be a satisfaction." Having said this, she hung down her head over him, and wept for a considerable time; till, being reminded by her servant that daybreak was at hand, she raised herself up, and taking the ring from her finger, with which he had espoused her, she put it upon his, saying, "My dear lord, if thy soul has any knowledge of my tears, or if there be any sense or understanding left after that is departed from the body, receive this last gift from her who was once so dear to thee:" and at these words she fell down in a swoon. In some little time she came to herself, when they took up the silk, on which the body was laid, and went with it out of the garden, towards his house.

As they were going along, it happened that they were met by some of the provost's officers, who were out upon another affair, and who seized them as they were carrying off the corpse. Andrevuola, coveting death at that time more than life, said freely to them, "I know who you are, and that it would be in vain to think of escaping; I am ready then to go before the magistrates, and to relate all I know concerning this matter; but let none of you dare to touch me, because I offer no resistance; nor touch anything belonging to this body, under pain of being accused himself." Accordingly it was carried untouched to the provost's hall, and, when notice of it was given to him, he arose, and she being brought before him he began to question her how, and by what means, this thing had happened. Physicians also were sent for to give their opinions, whether it was done by poison, or any such way: they all declared the contrary, affirming that some vein near the heart had burst, which had suffocated him. The provost hearing this, and perceiving her innocence, pretended to make a matter of favour of it, and told her that he would set her at liberty, upon condition that she would yield herself to his pleasure, which she refusing, he was base enough to try force. But she, fired with a noble disdain, defended herself with great courage and resolution.

It being now broad day, and the news being carried to Signor Negro, he went, full of grief, to the hall, attended by many of his friends, and, being informed of his daughter's innocence, he demanded her from the provost, who, choosing rather to mention himself what had happened, than to allow her to accuse him, began, with great commendation of her constancy and virtue, owned his designs towards her, and

offered to marry her, nothwithstanding the meanness of her former marriage, if it was agreeable to her father and herself. Whilst he was speaking, Andrevuola entered, and falling down on her knees before her father, said, "My dear father, I suppose I need not tell you either of my boldness or of my misfortune, as you must certainly have heard of both: therefore I most humbly beg your forgiveness for having married without your knowledge, the person whom I most loved; and this I do with no view to a pardon, but that I may die as your daughter, and not as an enemy."

Signor Negro was advanced in years, and, being one of a courteous and gentle disposition, could not refrain from tears at these words, and, raising her tenderly from the ground, he said, "Daughter, I should have been more glad if you had taken such a husband as I had approved of; yet, if you married to please yourself, this ought to please me. But to conceal it entirely, gives me concern for the little confidence you repose in me; especially as he died before I knew anything of the matter: but since it is so, the respect, for your sake, that I would have showed him, as my son-in-law, whilst he was living, I mean to express now he is dead." Then, turning to his children and friends, he ordered them to get everything in readiness for a solemn and magnificent funeral.

By this time Gabriotto's friends and relations had assembled, as well as great crowds from all parts of the city; and, the corpse being set in the middle of the court in the manner she had before adorned it, great lamentation was made over it, by all the relations and others present; and thence it was carried to the grave with the utmost honour and respect, not like that of an ordinary citizen, but as of a person of quality, upon the shoulders of some of the most eminent citizens. A few days afterwards, the provost renewed his request, and Signor Negro recommended it to his daughter, who would hear nothing of it; and he, willing to content her, sent both her and her maid into a monastery of great devotion, where, after a long course of time, they ended their lives.

NOVEL VII.

Pasquino is in love with Simona; and being in a garden with her, he happens to rub his teeth with a leaf of sage, and immediately dies. She is brought before the judge, when, being desirous of showing him the cause of Pasquino's death, she rubs her teeth with the same herb, and meets with a similar fate.

PAMFILO had finished his novel, when the king, seeming to be under no concern for Andrevuola, turned to Emilia, and desired her to begin, which she did accordingly in this manner:—Pamfilo's story puts me in mind of another, which is only like it in this respect, that, as Andrevuola lost her lover in a garden, so she of whom I am going to speak, was taken up in the same manner, as Andrevuola was, and delivered from the hands of justice, neither by force nor virtue, but by unexpected death. And though we have said before, that love makes his habitation in the houses of great people, yet does he not disown all influence over the poorer sort. On the contrary, all powerful as he is, he shows his power over them, as well as over the rich, as will appear in a great measure from my novel, which brings me back again to our city, whence we have so far strayed to talk of other subjects that have happened in different parts of the world.

There lived not long since at Florence, a young woman, agreeable enough, for her rank in life, but descended of mean parents, whose name was Simona; and though she earned her bread by spinning, yet she was not beneath the passion of love, with which she was inspired by the pleasing conversation and behaviour of a young man of the same condition as herself, who used to bring her wool to spin for his master, a clothier. From this youth, whose name was Pasquino, she received the amorous flame, ever wishing, but not expecting anything farther; whilst still, as her wheel went round, she sent forth a thousand sighs, calling him then to mind who had brought her the wool. He, on the other hand, being desirous that his master's work should be well done, used to call oftener upon Simona than upon any one else, as if her spinning was to make up the whole piece; whence the one continuing to solicit, and the other desiring to be solicited, it happened, that the first began to assume more courage than he used to have, and the second lost a good deal of her fear and bashfulness, so that they seemed at last to have come to a tolerable understanding.

This mutual good will of theirs continuing for some time, and every day increasing, he said to her one day, that he desired of all things to meet her in a certain garden, where they might talk together with greater freedom and less suspicion. She assured him that she was willing; and telling her father, one Sunday after dinner, that she was going for a pardon to St. Gallo, she went along with a companion of hers, called Lagina, to the place appointed. There she found Pasquino with a friend of his, named Puccino, though more usually called Stramba. Stramba and Lagina soon became acquainted, and each drew to one end of the garden, whilst Pasquino and Simona were at the other. In that part where this couple was, grew a large bush of sage, near which they seated themselves, and having talked about a feast, which they intended to have some holiday in that garden, he plucked a leaf of the sage, and began to rub his teeth and gums with it, saying, that nothing cleansed the teeth better after eating than sage; and when he had done, he returned to his former subject of the feast, when immediately he began to change countenance, his sight and speech both failed him, and he suddenly expired.

When Simona saw this she began to lament, and scream for help to the other two, who instantly ran up, and seeing him not only swollen, but full of black spots, Stramba immediately cried out, "Oh! thou vile woman, thou hast poisoned him." He made such an uproar, that he was heard by many of the neighbours, who flocked thither, and finding the man dead and swollen, and hearing Stramba lament and accuse Simona of his death, whilst grief for the loss of her lover, and astonishment together, had so confounded her, that she scarcely made any defence, they supposed it was as he said. Upon this the poor creature was carried before a magistrate; when Stramba, and two other friends of Pasquino, being her accusers, the judge took immediate cognizance of the case, and not being able to see any malicious intent in Simona, or that she was in the least guilty, he wished to view the dead body, as well as the place and manner of the occurrence, because there were some things which he could not well understand from her account. Coming, then, without any great bustle to the garden, where Pasquino's body lay puffed up like a tun, the judge was surprised, and inquired particularly how it happened. Simona went to the bush of sage, and having related the whole affair, that he might have a perfect account, rubbed her teeth with a leaf, as Pasquino had done. Stramba

and the rest looked upon this as a frivolous and vain pretence, and called out violently to the judge to have her burnt for her wickedness; whilst she (miserable wretch!) grieved for the loss of her lover, and terrified to death with their threats, having rubbed her teeth with the same sage that he had used, dropped down dead in a similar manner, to the wonder of them all.

Happy souls! to end both their loves and their lives on the same day. More happy still, if they went together to the same place! Happiest, if they love one another as much in the other world as here! But happiest of all, at least in our judgment, is the soul of Simona, whose innocence fortune would not leave at the mercy of such witnesses, and therefore found a way, by her dying the same death with her lover, for her to escape their slander, and to follow the soul of her beloved Pasquino. The judge was lost in amazement at this accident, as well as the rest of the company; and upon recollecting himself at last, he said, "This sage is plainly venomous; therefore, that nobody else may suffer by it, let it be cut up by the roots, and burnt." This was done by the gardener in his presence, when the cause of the lovers' deaths plainly appeared. Under the sage was a monstrous overgrown toad, with whose breath it was judged to be infected. And none being hardy enough to go near it, they made a circle of stubble round it, and burnt it along with the sage. So ended the process upon the death of poor Pasquino, whose body, as well as that of Simona, was interred by Stramba and the rest of the people present, in St. Paul's church, to which parish they were said to belong.

NOVEL VIII.

Girolamo is in love with Salvestra, and is obliged by his mother to go to Paris; on his return he finds her married; and getting privately into her house, he breathes his last by her side. On his being carried thence to a church to be buried, she dies likewise upon his corpse.

Emilia's novel was concluded, when, by the king's order, Neifile began as follows:—There are some people, most worthy ladies, who think they know more than other folks, and yet know less; and who upon this presumption not only oppose their opinions to the general sense of mankind, but even to the very nature of things; whence proceed frequently

great inconveniences, and never any good. Amongst natural causes, that which the least brooks any advice or opposition is love, the nature of which is such, as more easily to wear away of itself, than to be removed by any admonition. I intend to relate a story of a lady, who, being willing to appear wiser than she really was, or than the thing, in which she would have shewed her good understanding, required; by endeavouring to drive away that passion from a heart, in which it was firmly implanted, deprived her son both of life and love at the same time.

In our city, as it is reported, there lived a great and wealthy merchant, whose name was Lionardo Sighieri, who by his wife had an only son called Girolamo. Lionardo died soon after his son was born, and the infant's guardians along with his mother took all possible care both of him and his affairs. As he grew up, amongst the other children of the neighbourhood, he used to play with a tailor's daughter much about the same age; in time that acquaintance changed into love, which became so vehement, that he was never easy unless he was in her company, and certainly her love was no less warm for him. His mother observed this, and would frequently reprimand and chastise him for it. Finding that ineffectual, she complained to his guardians; and thinking, on account of his wealth, that she might work impossibilities, she said to them, "This boy of mine, who is but fourteen years old, has taken such a fancy to a tailor's daughter, and unless we remove him he will marry her privately some time or another, which will be death to me; or else he will pine and consume himself away, if he sees her married to another person; for which reason I think it best to send him a distance off, to some of our factors, in order by his absence to put her out of his thoughts, and afterwards we may provide a more suitable wife for him." They agreed with her that it would be right to do so, and promised her all the service that lay in their power. Calling him then into the counting-house, one of them spoke kindly to him in this manner: "Young gentleman, as you are now of considerable years, it is fit that you should begin to look after your own affairs; for which reason we consider it proper that you go and reside some time at Paris, where you will see how a great part of your trade is carried on; besides, you will have greater opportunities there of improving yourself than you can have here, and after you have conversed with persons of quality and distinction, of whom there are great numbers at Paris,

and learned their breeding and elegant accomplishments, it will then be time for you to return." He listened very attentively, and replied in a few words, that he would not consent, because he thought it full as well to stay at Florence. They reproved him a little for it; but finding they could get no other answer, they acquainted his mother. She was in a violent passion, and gave him hard words, not on account of his refusing to go, but for his love affairs; and this availing nothing, she began to use gentler means, entreating him in the mildest terms that he would oblige his guardians; and she prevailed so far, that he consented to go and stay one year there, and no more, and accordingly he went.

Being sent thus to Paris, over head and ears in love, his return was put off from one day to another, until he was kept there at last two years; when coming home, more enamoured than ever, he found, to his bitter grief, that his mistress was married to a young man, a tent-maker. Seeing, however, that the thing could not be remedied, he endeavoured to bear it patiently; and finding out the place where she lived, he began, as is usual with young lovers, to walk frequently by the house, supposing that she could no more have forgotten him, than he had forgotten her. But the case was otherwise: she remembered him no more than if she had never seen him, at least it seemed so by her behaviour, which gave him great trouble; yet, notwithstanding, he tried all means to make her call him to mind; but, finding it in vain, he resolved to speak to her, though it cost him his life. Having made himself acquainted, through a neighbour, with the interior arrangement of the house, he got into it privately one night, when the husband and wife were gone to spend the evening with some friends, and hid himself in their chamber, behind some sail cloths, where he waited until they returned and were in bed; and when he thought the husband fast asleep, he went softly to her side, and laying his hand upon her breast, said gently to her, "My dear life, are you asleep?" She, happening to be awake, was going to cry out, when he immediately added, "For God's sake make no noise; I am your old lover, Girolamo." She, hearing this, replied, all in a tremble, "Dear sir, go about your business; the time when we might love one another is past; you see I am married, and therefore am only to regard my husband; I entreat you, then, to depart; for if he should know of it, supposing nothing worse to happen, I should be miserable as long as I live, and our lives hitherto have been very comfortable together." The

youth was extremely troubled at these words, and though he put her in mind of past times, and used many arguments and fair promises to persuade her, yet it was all in vain. At last he desired, that, as a recompense for all his love, she would only let him lie by her side till he had warmed himself a little, for that he was quite chilled while waiting for her, promising neither to speak or touch her, and when he grew warmer, go away. She, having some compassion left for him, gave leave upon those conditions. He then lay down by her, and calling to mind his long passion, and her inflexible cruelty, as one destitute of all hope, he resolved to die; and holding his breath strongly, he clenched his hands, and expired by her side.

After some little time, she being surprised at his lying so still, and fearing lest her husband should wake, began to say to him, "Alas! sir, why do you not go away?" Perceiving that he made no answer, she supposed he was asleep, and putting her hand out to jog him, found him quite cold; being greatly amazed at this, and shaking him more strongly, she perceived he was certainly dead. Affected beyond measure, she lay a considerable time, not knowing what course to take. At length she resolved to sound her husband, by making it another person's case; awakening him, therefore, she proposed it to him, as having happened to somebody else, and then asked him what he would do in such an affair. The honest man replied, that he would have him carried privately home, without the least resentment to the woman, because she seemed to be in no way in fault. "Then," said she, "we must do so now:" and taking hold of his hand, laid it upon the dead body. He arose in a great fright, and, lighting a candle, immediately took the corpse upon his shoulders, having first put all its clothes upon it and relying upon his innocence, carried it to the mother's door, and left it there. When it was found in the morning there was a great uproar about it, and the body was examined all over, and no wound or bruise appearing, the physicians declared that he had died for grief, and such was really the case. The corpse was then carried to the church, attended by the sorrowful mother, and other friends and relations to lament over it, according to the custom of our city; and whilst this was doing, the honest man, in whose house he had died, said to his wife, "Go, veil yourself, and hasten to the church, and hear among the women what they say about it, and I will do the same amongst the men, by which

means we shall know whether they have any suspicion of us." The woman, who had some pity for him when it was too late, grew desirous of seeing him dead, to whom, whilst living, she would not vouchsafe the favour of one kiss, and went directly thither.

Wondrously inscrutable are the powerful workings of love. That heart which was proof against the prosperous fortune of Girolamo, was now pierced by his adversity; and the old flames of love, which were revived, had such an effect upon her, that, veiled as she was, she still pressed forwards to the corpse, when uttering a most terrible shriek, and falling down with her face upon it, she shed but a few tears, for the very instant almost that she touched it, grief deprived her of life, as it did Girolamo. Instantly the women began to comfort her, not knowing who she was, and to desire her to rise, but perceiving that she did not stir, they lifted her up, when they knew her to be Salvestra, and beheld that she was quite dead. Overcome, then, as it were by a double compassion, they set up a greater lamentation than before. The news being carried through the church, soon came to the ears of Salvestra's husband. He was deeply affected, and having related to some that stood by the whole affair of the preceding night, the cause of both their deaths plainly appeared, and they were generally lamented. They then took the dead lady, and laid her by his side upon the same bier, and they were buried with the greatest lamentations in the same grave. So this pair, whom love could not join together in their lifetime, were united inseparably by death.

NOVEL IX.

Gulielmo Rossiglione gave his wife to eat the heart of Gulielmo Guardastagno, her gallant, whom he had slain; as soon as she knew this, she threw herself out of a window, and, dying, was buried along with him.

THERE being an end of Neifile's novel, not without the greatest compassion expressed by the whole company, the king, who meant not to infringe upon Dioneo's privilege, as there was nobody else left to speak, began thus:—I now call to mind a story, which, as you are upon sorrowful subjects, will move you no less than the last, as the persons concerned were of greater figure, and the event more cruel.

You must know, then, that in Provence were two noble

knights, who had each of them castles of their own, and vassals under their subjection; one of these knights was called Gulielmo Rossiglione, and the other, Gulielmo Guardastagno; and, being both persons of great prowess, they took a great delight in military exploits, and used to go together to all tilts and tournaments, and appeared always in the same colours. Though they lived ten miles asunder, yet it happened, that Rossiglione having a very beautiful wife, the other, notwithstanding the friendship that existed between them, became violently in love, and by one means or other he soon let her know it. He being a valiant knight, this was not at all displeasing to her, and she began to entertain the same respect for him, so that she wished for nothing so much as that he should speak to her upon that subject, which in some little time came to pass, and they were together more than once. Being not so discreet as they ought to have been, the husband soon perceived it, and he resented it to that degree, that the extreme friendship he had entertained for Guardastagno was turned into the most inveterate hatred; but he was more private with it, than they had the prudence to be with their amour, and was fully bent upon putting him to death. Continuing in this resolution, it fell out, that a public tilting match was proclaimed in France, which Rossiglione immediately signified to Guardastagno, and sent to desire his company at his castle, when they would confer together about going, and in what manner; Guardastagno was extremely pleased with the message, and sent word back that he would sup with him the next night without fail.

Rossiglione hearing this, thought it a fit opportunity to effect his design, and arming himself the next day, with some of his servants, he went on horseback into a wood about a mile from his castle, through which Guardastagno was to pass, where he lay in wait for him. After a long stay, he beheld him coming unarmed, with two servants unarmed likewise, as not apprehending any danger; and, when he saw him in a fit place for his purpose, he ran with his lance at him, with the utmost malice and fury, saying, "Villain, thou art a dead man!" and the very instant he spoke the word, the lance passed out behind through his breast, and he fell down dead, without uttering a word. The servants, not knowing who had done this, turned their horses, and fled with all possible haste to their lord's castle. Rossiglione now dismounted from his horse, and with a knife cut Guar-

dastagno's breast open, and took out his heart, and, wrapping it in the streamer belonging to his lance, gave it to one of his servants to carry. Then commanding them not to dare to speak of it, he mounted his horse, and, it being now night, returned to his castle.

The lady, who had heard of Guardastagno's supping there that night, and longed much to see him, finding that he did not come, was a good deal surprised, and said to her husband, "Pray, what is the reason that Guardastagno is not here?" He replied, "I have just received a message from him that he cannot be with us till to-morrow;" at which she seemed very uneasy. As soon as he alighted from his horse, he sent for the cook, and said to him, "Here, take this boar's heart, and be sure you make it as delicious as possible, and send it up to the table in a silver dish. Accordingly, he took and minced it very small, dressing it up with rich spices, and making it a sort of high-seasoned forced meat.

When supper-time came, they sat down, and the dishes were served up; but Rossiglione could not eat much for thinking of what he had done. At last the cook having sent up the forced meat, he set it before his lady, pretending himself to be out of order, but commending it to her as a nice dish. She, who was not at all squeamish, began to taste, and liked it so well that she ate it all up. When he saw that she had made an end, he said, "Madam, how do you like it?" she replied, "In good truth, sir, I like it much."—"As God shall help me," quoth the knight, "I believe you; nor do I wonder that it pleases you so much now it is dead, which, when living, pleased you above all things." She made a pause at this, and then said,—"Why, what is it that you have given me?" He replied, "It is really the heart of Guardastagno, whom you, base woman, loved so well: be assured it is the same, for these very hands took it out of his breast, a little time before I returned home."

When the lady heard this of him whom she loved above all the world, you may easily imagine what her anguish must have been. At last she replied, "You have acted like a base villain as you are; for if I granted him a favour of my own accord, and you were injured thereby, it was I, and not he, that ought to have been punished. But let it never be said that any other food ever came after such a noble repast as was the heart of so valiant and worthy a knight." Then, rising up, she instantly threw herself out of the window. It was a great height from the ground, and she was

in a manner dashed to pieces. He, seeing this, was a good deal confounded, and being conscious of having done a base action, fearing also the country's resentment, he had his horses saddled, and fled directly away. The next morning the whole story was known all round the country, when the two bodies were taken and buried together with the utmost lamentation in one grave in the church which had belonged to the lady; and verses were written over them, signifying who they were, as well as the manner and cause of their deaths.

[Some commentators on Boccaccio have believed the tale to be taken from the well-known story of Raoul de Couci, who, while dying of wounds received at the siege of Acre, ordered his heart to be conveyed to his mistress, the Lady of Fayel: but this singular present being intercepted in the way, was dressed by command of the exasperated husband, and presented at table to his wife, who having incautiously partaken of it, vowed never to receive any other nourishment. But as Boccaccio himself informs the reader that his tale is given according to the relation of the Provençals, it seems more probable that it is taken from the story of the Provençal poet Cabestan, which is told by Nostrodamus, in his 'Lives of the Troubadours.' Besides, the story of Cabestan possesses a much closer resemblance to the novel of Boccaccio than the fiction concerning Raoul de Couci and the Lady of Fayel; indeed it precisely corresponds with the Decameron, except in the names, and in the circumstance that the lady stabs herself, instead of leaping from the window.

NOVEL X.

A doctor's wife puts her gallant into a chest, imagining him to be dead, which chest is stolen by two usurers, and carried home. He comes to himself, and is taken for a thief; whilst the lady's maid informs the magistrates that she had put him into a chest, which the usurers had carried away, upon which he escapes, and they are fined a sum of money.

Dioneo was the only person now left to speak, who accordingly began, by the king's order, as follows:—"The miseries of unfortunate lovers, which have been related by you, have so affected both my eyes and heart, that I have long wished there might be an end of such tales. We may now be thankful that they are all over, unless I should add one to their number, which is no part of my design; I mean therefore to shift the scene, and to present you with a little mirth after all this sorrow, and which may serve as a good argument for to-morrow's discourse.

You must understand, then, that not long since there lived at Salerno a famous doctor in surgery, called Master Mazzeo della Montagna, who in his old age had married a young and beautiful wife, of the same city. There being such a disproportion in their years, he spared no cost for clothes and jewels, and gratified her in all such things to the utmost of her wishes; so that in that respect she was far better off than any other lady in the city. But she was not to be so satisfied; and looking out amongst the young gentlemen of Salerno, she at last fixed upon one, on whom she settled her entire hope and affection; and he being made sensible of it, shewed the same regard for her. He was named Ruggieri da Jeroli, and came of a noble family, but had always been of a rakish disposition, on which account he had displeased all his friends so far, that none of them would see him, and he was now branded all over Salerno for everything that was vile and wicked. This had no weight with her, and by her maid's assistance they were brought together, when she reproved him for his past conduct, and desired, that, for her sake, he would leave off those wicked courses; and to take away all temptation, she supplied him from time to time with money. The affair being carried on in this manner between them with a good deal of caution, it happened that the doctor had a patient in the meantime, who had a bad leg; this, he told the person's friends was owing to a decayed bone, which he must take out to make a cure, otherwise the patient must either lose his leg, or his life; but in every way he looked upon it as a very doubtful case. The friends bade him do as he thought proper. Now the doctor, supposing that the patient would never be able to endure the pain without an opiate, deferred the operation till the evening; and in the meantime, ordered a certain water to be distilled, which, being drunk, would throw a person asleep as long as he judged it necessary in this particular case. This water being brought home to him, he set it in his chamber window without saying what it was.

Now in the evening when he was to perform this operation, a messenger arrived from some very considerable persons at Malfi, who were his friends, charging him to come away instantly, for that there had been a great fray among them, in which many people were wounded. The doctor then put off the operation on the man's leg till the morning, and went in a boat directly to Malfi: whilst the lady knowing that he would be out all night, had her gallant brought

privately into her chamber, where she locked him in, till certain persons of her family were gone to bed. Ruggieri, waiting thus in the chamber, expecting his mistress, and being extremely thirsty, whether from fatigue, or some salt meat that he had eaten, or rather from a bad habit which he had of drinking, happened to cast his eye upon the bottle of water, which the doctor had ordered for his patient, and imagining it something pleasant to drink, he took it all off at a draught, and in a little time he fell into a profound doze. The lady made what haste she could to her chamber, and finding him fast asleep, began, with a low voice, to try to wake him; but he making no reply, nor even stirring, she was much vexed, and shook him roughly, saying, "Get up, sluggard! If thou art disposed to sleep, thou shouldst have stayed at home, and not come to sleep here." He being pushed in that manner, fell down from a chest, on which he was sitting, upon the ground, and shewed no more sense or feeling than if he had been really dead. She was now under greater concern, and began to pull him by the nose, as well as twinge him by the beard, but it was all of no service; the enchantment was too strong. On this she really suspected him to be dead, and pinched and burned his flesh with the candle, till, finding all to no purpose, and being no doctress, although her husband was a doctor, she took it for granted he was a corpse.

You may easily suppose what her grief now must be, as she loved Ruggieri beyond all the world. Not daring to make any noise, she for some time continued silently deploring her calamity: till fearing at last lest dishonour should follow, she thought some means must be contrived to convey him out of the house. Not knowing how to manage it herself, she called her maid and advised with her about it. The girl was in great surprise, and trying all means to rouse Ruggieri to no purpose, agreed with her mistress that he was certainly dead, and that it was best to get him away. "But where can we carry him," said the lady, "that it may never be suspected to-morrow, when he shall be found, that he was brought from this house?"—"Madam," replied the maid, "I saw late this evening a good large chest, standing before a joiner's shop in our neighbourhood. If it be not taken into the house again, we may put him in there well enough, giving him two or three slashes with a pen-knife; whoever finds him will scarcely imagine that we should put him there rather than anywhere else; on the contrary, it will rather be

supposed that he has been upon some bad exploit, because he has a general ill character, and that he was killed by his adversary, and so shut up in the chest." The lady approved of her maid's advice in everything save the wounding him, saying, that for all the world she would never consent to that: accordingly she sent her to see if the chest was still there. The maid brought her back word that it was; and, being stout and lusty, she took him on her shoulders, whilst the lady went first to see that nobody was in the way; and so coming to the chest, they threw him in, shut the lid, and left him there.

The same day, as it chanced, two young men, who let out money upon interest, had taken a house a little farther on in the same street. Willing to gain much, and spend but little, and having need of household goods, they had taken notice of that chest the day before, and were resolved, if it should be left there all night, to steal it away At midnight, then, they went and carried it off, without at all examining its contents, though it seemed to be very heavy; and, setting it down in a chamber where their wives lay, they went to bed. Now Ruggieri, by this time, had got the greatest part of his sleep over; and his draught being pretty well digested, and its virtue at an end, he awoke before morning. But though his senses were in some measure returned to him, yet was there a kind of stupefaction remaining, which continued not that night only, but for several days. He opened his eyes, however, and seeing nothing, groped about with his hands, and perceiving that he was shut up, he was in the utmost amazement, and said to himself—"What is the meaning of this? Where am I? Am I asleep or awake? I remember last night to have been in my mistress's chamber, and now methinks I am in a chest. What can it mean? Surely the doctor has returned, or some other accident has happened; and she, finding me asleep, put me in here: it can be nothing else."

Upon that consideration he lay still, and began to listen if he could hear anything stir, and having lain for some time in an uneasy posture, as the chest was narrow, and that side being sore which he had pressed so long upon, he wished to turn upon the other; when, thrusting his back against one side of the chest, which stood upon an uneven place, he overset it, and down it came to the floor, with such a noise, that the women were awakened, and frightened out of their wits. Ruggieri upon this knew not what to think, but

finding the chest open with the fall, he thought it better to get out if he could, than to stay within it; therefore he went groping up and down in the dark, to find some door or place to make his escape at. The women, hearing this, cried out, "Who is there?" But he, not knowing their voices, made no answer. Upon this they began to call their husbands, but they were so fast asleep, having been awake the greatest part of the night, that they heard nothing of the matter. They were then more terrified than before, and went to the window, calling out "Thieves! thieves!" This brought together many of the neighbours, who forced their way into the house. The husbands also were roused by all this clamour, and seized upon poor Ruggieri, who was out of his wits almost with surprise to find himself in a place from which he saw no possibility of making his escape. By this time the city officers were drawn to the spot by the tumult and uproar. Into their hands, therefore, he was delivered, and was had by them before the provost, when he was immediately put to the rack, as he was one of bad character, and he confessed that he had got into the house with intent to rob it; whereupon the provost sentenced him to be hanged.

That morning the news was carried all over Salerno, that Ruggieri was taken breaking into the usurers' house; which the lady and her maid hearing, were so astonished, that they could scarcely believe that what had happened the preceding night was real; whilst the lady was in such concern for her lover that she was almost distracted. Some few hours after the doctor returned from Malfi, when he inquired for his narcotic water, because he was then going to perform his operation and finding the bottle empty, he made a terrible hubbub, telling them that nothing in his house could stand untouched for them. The lady, who had something else that lay nearer her heart, replied with some warmth, "What would you say in anything of consequence, when you make such a stir about a little water?" The doctor then said, "My lady, you should consider this is no common water; it is water distilled to cause sleep;" and he further told her upon what account it was made. When she heard this, she guessed that Ruggieri had drunk it off, and that this was the cause of their having supposed him to be dead, and she added, "Sir, we knew nothing of your intention, but if you please you can make more:" and he perceiving that there was no other remedy, did so.

Soon afterwards the maid, whom she had sent to learn

news of her lover, returned, and said, "Madam, there is nobody that speaks well of Ruggieri, whether relation or otherwise, or intends to give him any assistance; but all people agree that he will be hanged to-morrow: one thing, however, I have learnt, which is new; that is how he came into those usurers' house, which I will tell you. You know the joiner at whose door the chest stood, wherein we had put him; he has just had a warm dispute with another person, who, it seems, owned the chest, and who insisted that the joiner should pay for it: however, he replied that he had not sold it, but that it was stolen from him. The other answered, 'It is a story, you sold it to two usurers, as they themselves told me this morning, when I saw it in their house at the time Ruggieri was taken.'—'They are liars,' quoth the joiner, 'I never sold it them; but they stole it from me last night; let us go to them therefore.' So away they went together, whilst I returned hither; hence it is easy to see that Ruggieri was carried in that manner to the place where he was taken; but how he came to himself afterwards is beyond my comprehension."

The lady now plainly saw how the case stood, and told her maid what she had learnt from the doctor, begging that she would lend her assistance in promoting her lover's escape; for it was in her power at once to save his life, and her own honour. "Madam," the maid answered, "tell me only how, and I will do it with all my heart."

The lady, as it was a thing that so nearly touched her, had all her wits about her, and gave the maid full instructions what she wished her to do: accordingly she went to the doctor, and began to weep, saying: "Sir, I am come to ask your pardon for a great crime which I have committed towards you." The doctor asked what crime it was? She, still crying, replied, "You know what sort of a person Ruggieri da Jeroli is, who has been my sweetheart for this twelvemonth past, notwithstanding all his imperfections. Knowing last night that you were abroad, he wheedled me so far, that I brought him into your house, and took him up into my chamber to be all night with me; when, being thirsty, and I not knowing how to get him either any water or wine, without being seen by my mistress, who was then in the hall, I suddenly recollected to have seen a bottle of water in your chamber, which I fetched and gave him to drink, and set the bottle again where I found it; and I since understand that you have been in a great passion about

it; I confess I did very ill; but who is there that some time or other does not act amiss? I am extremely sorry for it; not so much on account of the thing itself, as what has ensued; for it has brought him in danger of his life. Therefore, I earnestly beg your forgiveness, and that you would give me leave to go and assist him to the utmost of my power."

The doctor, hearing this story, answered merrily, notwithstanding his former passion, "You have reason enough to be sorry upon your own account, for instead of having a brisk young fellow, you had nothing but a sluggard. You may go, then, and save the man if you can, but take care you do so no more; for if you do, I shall then pay you for all together." Having this answer, she thought she had made a good beginning: therefore she hastened to the prison, and persuaded the gaoler to let her speak to Ruggieri; when, having informed him what answers he was to make to the magistrate, if he meant to escape, she went thence to the judge, to whom she got introduced, and said to him, "Sir, you have had Ruggieri da Jeroli before you, who was taken up for a thief; but the case is quite otherwise:" and then she related her whole story; how she had brought him into the doctor's house, how she had given him that narcotic water to drink without knowing it, and how he was put into the chest for dead: she afterwards told him what had passed between the joiner and owner of the chest, making it appear how he came into the usurers' house.

The judge saw that it would be an easy thing to come at the truth of this matter; therefore, he first inquired of the doctor whether the story was true concerning the water, and found it exactly so: he then sent for the joiner and owner of the chest, as also the usurers, and after much examination it appeared that they had stolen the chest the foregoing night, and carried it home. Last of all, he had Ruggieri brought before him, when he being asked where he had lodged that night, he replied, that he could not tell where he actually did lie, but said, his intention was to have lain with the doctor's maid, in whose chamber he had drunk some water to quench his most violent thirst, but as for what became of him from that time, to the time of his awaking, and finding himself in the chest in the usurers' house, that he could give no account of.

The judge was mightily pleased with their statements, and made them repeat their several stories over and over. At length, perceiving Ruggieri to be innocent, he gave him

his liberty, and sentenced the usurers to pay a fine of ten crowns. It is easy to imagine what Ruggieri's joy now was, as well as that of the lady. They made themselves very merry together afterwards with the maid, for the slashes with her penknife, which she had meant to give him, still going on in the same mirth and pleasure from good to better; which I wish may happen always to myself, but never to be put into a chest.

If the former novels had occasioned great grief and sorrow to the ladies, this last of Dioneo's made ample amends. But the king now perceiving that the sun was about to set, and that his sovereignty was therefore at an end, began to excuse himself for giving such a cruel subject to expatiate upon, as the unhappiness of lovers: then rising up he took the crown from his head, and whilst they were waiting to see to whom he would resign it, he put it upon Fiammetta saying, "I make choice of you, as one who knows better than any other person to comfort us, for what we have heard to-day, with to-morrow's mirth."

Fiammetta, whose golden locks hung in long graceful ringlets over her white and delicate shoulders, her face round and beautiful with white and red, like lilies and roses blended together; her eyes like those of a falcon, with a little mouth, and lips like rubies: she, I say, said with a smile, "I willingly accept the sovereignty, Filostrato; and, to the end that you may better recollect yourself concerning what you have done hitherto, I will and command that every one be prepared to treat to-morrow upon what has happened happily to lovers, after certain cruel and unlucky accidents;" which proposal was agreeable to them all. Calling, then, the steward, and concerting with him what was most needful to be done, she gave them leave to depart till supper. Some, therefore, walked into the garden, the beauty of which was such, that they were never weary of it; others went to see the mill, and some went to one place, and some to another, according to their different inclinations; till the time being come, they all met together, as usual, by the fountain-side, where they supped with great elegance, and satisfaction to themselves. When that was over, they began to dance and sing: and as Filomena was leading up the dance, the queen said, "Filostrato, I do not intend to deviate from the example of my predecessors, but as they have done hitherto, so I intend to order a song: and as I am very sure

that yours are like your novels, therefore, that no more of our days may be disturbed with your misfortunes, I desire you would give us one of those which pleases you most." Filostrato replied, "With all my heart;" and immediately began the following

SONG.

CHORUS.

Sure, none can more your pity move,
Than I, who am betray'd in love.

When my poor wounded heart,
For her of whom I now complain,
First felt the am'rous smart,
The greatest pain
As nought I deemed:
For she, since most unkind,
Then all perfection seem'd
But, ah! too late my error now I find.
Sure, etc.

For why? I see myself deceiv'd
By her, my only hope and joy
And when too fondly I believ'd,
None so secure, so blest as I;
All past engagements laid aside,
To soothe a happier rival's pride.
Sure, etc.

Since my disgrace,
I mourn and curse the day
When her too beauteous face
First stole my ravish'd heart away;
Whilst my too easy faith and love
An endless source of sorrow prove.
Sure, etc.

So great the grief,
Which has my mind possest!
That vain is all relief,
And only death can give me rest;
'Tis that shall all my sorrows close
With a secure and long repose.
Sure, etc.

No other means remain
To ease my pain!
But, oh! when clos'd shall be these eyes,
Within her breast
Let ne'er one anxious thought arise
Be she for ever blest!
Sure, etc.

Yet ere I go,
Kind Cupid whisper in her ear
That 'tis for her,
I all these torments know:
Perhaps she may repent her usage past,
And grant my love a kind return at last.

Sure none can more your pity move,
Than I who am betrayed in love.

Filostrato's sentiments, and the grounds of them, were plainly set forth in this song, and perhaps the lady's countenance who was engaged in the dance, would have made a farther discovery, if the darkness of the night had not concealed the blushes rising in her face; but the song being ended, as well as many others afterwards, and the hour of rest now drawing on, by the queen's command they all repaired to their several chambers.

THE FIFTH DAY.

The sun now darted forth his golden beams over the face of our hemisphere, when Fiammetta awaked by the sweet music of the birds, which had been merrily chanting among the trees from the first peep of day, arose, and had all the company called up; when they walked leisurely together upon the dewy grass, into a pleasant meadow, until the sun was a little higher, conferring by the way upon many agreeable subjects. At last, when the heat grew a little intense, they retreated to their former station, where they refreshed themselves with wine and sweetmeats, and diverted themselves afterwards in the garden till dinner-time: everything being provided at that hour, in the neatest manner, by their steward, they had a song or two, and then sat down: and dinner being ended, they were entertained again both with music and dancing. After that was over the queen gave them their liberty; when, accordingly, some went to lie down, and others amused themselves in the mean time in the garden; but at the usual hour they all met by her order at the fountain-side. Then, seated on her throne, and casting her eye upon Pamfilo, she smiled, and desired him to begin; he immediately complied in this manner.

NOVEL I.

Cymon becomes wise by being in love, and by force of arms wins Iphigenia, his mistress, upon the seas, and is imprisoned at Rhodes. Being delivered thence by Lysimachus, with him he recovers Iphigenia, and flies with her to Crete, where he is married to her, and is afterwards recalled home.

A GREAT many novels come now fresh into my mind, for the beginning of such an agreeable day's discourse as this is likely to be; but one I am more particularly pleased with, because it not only shows the happy conclusion which we are to treat about, but how sacred, how powerful also, as well as advantageous, is the force of love; which some people, without knowing what they say, unjustly blame and vilify, and which I judge will rather be had in esteem by you, as I suppose you all to be subject to the tender passion.

According to the ancient histories of Cyprus, there lived sometime in that island, one of great rank and distinction, called Aristippus, who was the wealthiest person in all the country. If he was unhappy in any one respect, it was in having, amongst his other children, a son, who, though he exceeded most young people of his age in stature and comeliness, yet was a perfect idiot; his name was Galeso, but as neither the labour nor skill of his master, nor the correction of his father, was ever able to beat one letter into his head, or the least instruction of any kind, and as his voice and manner of speaking were strangely harsh and uncouth, he was, by way of disdain, called only Cymon; which, in their language, signified *beast*. The father had long beheld him with infinite vexation, and as all hopes were vanished concerning him, to remove out of his sight an object which afforded constant matter of grief, he ordered him away to his country-house, to be there with his slaves. This was extremely agreeable to Cymon, because people of that sort had always been most to his mind. Residing there, and doing all sorts of drudgery pertaining to that kind of life, it happened one day, as he was going, about noon-tide, with his staff upon his shoulder, from one farm to another, that he passed through a pleasant grove, which, as it was then the month of May, was all in bloom. Thence, as his stars led him, he came into a meadow surrounded with high trees, in one corner of which was a crystal spring, and by the side of

it, upon the grass, lay a most beautiful damsel asleep, clothed with a mantle so exceedingly fine and delicate, as scarcely to conceal the exquisite whiteness of her skin; only from her waist downwards she wore a white silken quilt, and at her feet were sleeping two women and a man-servant.

As soon as Cymon cast his eyes upon her, he stood leaning upon his staff, as if he had never seen the face of a woman before, and began to gaze with the utmost astonishment without speaking a word. Presently, in his rude uncivilised breast, which had hitherto been incapable of receiving the least sense of good-breeding whatever, a sudden thought arose, which seemed to intimate to his gross and shallow understanding, that this was the most agreeable sight that ever was seen. Starting from that fixed point, he began to examine each part by itself, commending every limb and feature; and having now from being a mere idiot become a judge of beauty, he grew very desirous of seeing the fair sleeper's eyes, for which purpose he was going several times to wake her; but as she so far excelled all other women that he ever saw, he was in doubt whether she was a mortal creature. This made him wait to see if she would awake of her own accord; and though that expectation seemed tedious to him, yet so pleasing was the object, that he had no power to leave it. After a long time she came to herself, and raising up her head, saw Cymon stand propped upon his stick before her, at which she was surprised, and said, "Cymon" (for he was known all over the country, as well for his own rusticity, as his father's nobility and great wealth), "What are you looking for here at this time of day?" He made no answer, but stood with his eyes fixed upon hers, which seemed to dart a sweetness that filled him with a kind of joy to which he had hitherto been a stranger; whilst she, observing this, and not knowing to what his rudeness might prompt him, called up her women, and then said, "Cymon, go about your business." He replied, "I will go along with you." And though she was afraid, and would have avoided his company, yet he would not leave her till he had brought her to her own house; thence he went home to his father, and he declared that he would return no more into the country. This was very disagreeable to all his friends, yet they let him alone, waiting to see what this change of temper could be owing to.

Love having thus penetrated his heart, where no lesson of any kind could ever find admittance, in a little time his way

of thinking and behaviour were so far changed that his father and friends were strangely surprised at it, as well as everybody that knew him. First of all then, he asked his father to let him have clothes, and everything else like his brothers; to which the father very willingly consented. Conversing, too, with young gentlemen of character, and observing their ways and manner of behaving, in a very short time he not only got over the first rudiments of learning, but attained to some knowledge in philosophy. Afterwards (his love for Iphigenia being the sole cause) his rude and rustic speech was changed into a tone more agreeable and civilised: he grew also a master of music: and with regard to the military art, as well by sea as land, he became as expert and gallant as the best. In short, not to run over all his excellences, before the expiration of the fourth year from his being first in love, he turned out the most accomplished young gentleman in every respect that ever Cyprus could boast of. What, then, most gracious ladies, shall we say of Cymon? Surely nothing less than this; that all the noble qualities, which had been infused by Heaven into his generous soul, were shut up as it were by invidious fortune, and bound fast with the strongest fetters in a small corner of his heart, till love broke the enchantment, and drove with all its might these virtues out of that cruel obscurity, to which they had been long doomed, to a clear and open day; plainly showing whence it draws those spirits that are its votaries, and whither its mighty influence conducts them.

Cymon might have his flights like other young people, with regard to his love for Iphigenia; yet, when Aristippus considered it was that which had made a man of him, he not only bore with it, but encouraged him in the pursuit of his pleasures. Cymon, nevertheless, who refused to be called Galeso, remembering that Iphigenia had styled him Cymon, being desirous of bringing that affair to a happy conclusion, had often requested her in marriage of her father, who replied that he had already promised her to one Pasimunda, a young nobleman of Rhodes, and that he intended not to break his word. The time then being come, that was appointed for their nuptials, and the husband having sent in form to demand her, Cymon said to himself: "O Iphigenia, the time is now come when I shall give proof how I love you! I am become a man on your account; and could I but obtain you, I should be as glorious and happy as the gods themselves; and have you I will, or else I will die."

Immediately he prevailed upon some young noblemen who were his friends, to assist him; and, fitting out a ship of war privately, they put to sea, in order to intercept the vessel that was to transport Iphigenia; who, after great respect and honour showed by her father to her husband's friends, embarked with them for Rhodes. Cymon, who had but little rest that night, overtook them on the following day, when he called out, "Stop, and strike your sails; or expect to go at once to the bottom of the sea." They, on the other hand, had got all their arms on deck, and were prepared to make a vigorous defence. He therefore threw a grappling iron upon the other ship, which was making the best of its way, and drew it close to his own; when, like a lion, without waiting for any one to second him, he jumped singly among his enemies, as if he cared not for them; and love spurring him on with incredible force, he cut and drove them all like so many sheep before him, till they soon threw down their arms, acknowledging themselves his prisoners; when he addressed them in the following manner: "Gentlemen, it was not a desire of plunder, nor enmity to any of your company, that made me leave Cyprus to fall upon you here in this manner. What occasioned it is a matter, the success of which is of the utmost consequence to myself, and as easy for you to grant me quietly: it is Iphigenia, whom I love above all the world; and as I could not have her from her father peaceably, and as a friend, my love constrains me to win her from you as an enemy, by force of arms. Therefore I am resolved to be to her what your Pasimunda was to have been. Resign her then to me, and go away in God's name." The people, more by force than any good will, gave her up, all in tears, to Cymon: who, seeing her lament in that manner, said, "Fair lady, be not discouraged: I am your Cymon, who has a much better claim to your affection, on account of his long and constant love, than Pasimunda can have by virtue of a promise." Taking her then on board his ship, without meddling with anything that belonged to them, he suffered them to depart.

Cymon thus being the most overjoyed man that could be, after comforting the lady under her calamity, consulted with his friends what to do, who were of opinion, that they should by no means return to Cyprus yet; but that it were better to go directly to Crete, where they all had relations and friends, but Cymon especially, on which account he might be more secure there along with Iphigenia; and accordingly

they directed their course that way. But fortune, who had given the lady to Cymon by an easy conquest, soon changed his immoderate joy into most sad and bitter lamentation. In about four hours from his parting with the Rhodians, night came upon them, which was more welcome to Cymon than any of the rest, and with it a most violent tempest, which overspread the face of the heavens in such a manner, that they could neither see what they did, nor whither they were carried; nor were they able at all to steer the ship. You may easily suppose what was Cymon's grief on this occasion. He concluded that Heaven had crowned his desires only to make death more grievous to him, which before would have been but little regarded. His friends also were greatly affected, but especially Iphigenia, who trembled at every shock, still sharply upbraiding his ill-timed love, and declaring that this tempest was sent by Providence for no other reason than to disappoint his presumption in resolving to have her, contrary to the will and disposal of Heaven, and that, seeing her die first, he might die likewise in the same miserable manner. Amongst such complaints as these, they were carried at last, the wind growing continually more violent, near the island of Rhodes; and not knowing where they were, they endeavoured, for the safety of their lives, to get to land if possible.

In this they succeeded, and got into a little bay, where the Rhodian ship had arrived just before them; nor did they know they were at Rhodes till the next morning, when they saw, about a bow-shot from them, the same ship they had parted with the day before. Cymon was greatly concerned at this, and fearing what afterwards came to pass, he bade them put to sea if possible, and trust to fortune, for they could never be in a worse place. They used all possible means then to get out, but in vain; the wind was strongly against them, and drove them to shore in spite of all they could do to prevent it. They were soon known by the sailors of the other ship, who had now gained the shore, and who ran to a neighbouring town, to which the young gentlemen that had been on board the ship were just gone before, and informed them how Cymon and Iphigenia were, like themselves, driven thither by stress of weather. They, hearing this, brought a great number of people from the town to the sea-side, and captured Cymon and all his companions, who had got on shore, with a design of fleeing to a neighbouring wood, as also Iphigenia, and brought them all

together to the town. Pasimunda, upon hearing the news, went and made his complaints to the senate, who, accordingly, sent Lysimachus, the chief magistrate of that year, along with a guard of soldiers, to conduct them to prison. Thus the miserable and enamoured Cymon lost his mistress soon after he had gained her, and without having scarcely so much as a kiss for his pains. In the mean time Iphigenia was handsomely received by many ladies of quality, and comforted for the trouble she had sustained in being made a captive, as well as in the storm at sea; and she remained with them till the day appointed for her nuptials. However, Cymon and his friends had their lives granted them (though Pasimunda used all his endeavours to the contrary) for the favour shown to the Rhodians the day before; but they were sentenced to perpetual imprisonment, where they remained sorrowfully enough, as they had no hopes of obtaining their liberty.

Now, whilst Pasimunda was making preparation for his nuptials, Fortune, as if she had repented the injury done to Cymon, produced a new circumstance for his deliverance. Pasimunda had a brother, beneath him in years, but not in virtue, called Ormisda, who had been long talked of as about to marry a beautiful lady of that city, called Cassandra, whom Lysimachus was also in love with, and had for some time been prevented from marrying her, by divers unlucky accidents. Now, as Pasimunda was to celebrate his own nuptials with great state and feasting, he supposed it would save a great deal of expense and trouble, if his brother was to marry at the same time. He consequently proposed the thing again to Cassandra's friends, and they soon brought it to a conclusion: when it was agreed by all parties, that the same day that Pasimunda brought home Iphigenia, Ormisda should bring home Cassandra. This was very grating to Lysimachus, who saw himself now deprived of the hope which he had hitherto entertained of marrying her himself; but he was wise enough to conceal it, contriving a way to prevent its taking effect if possible; none however appeared, but that of taking her away by force. This seemed easy enough on account of his office; still he thought it not so reputable as if he had borne no office at all at that time; but in fine, after a long debate with himself, honour gave way to love, and he resolved, happen what would, to bear away Cassandra. Thinking then what companions he should make choice of for this enterprise, as well as the means that

were to be taken, he soon called Cymon to mind, whom he had in custody, as also his companions; and thinking he could have nobody better to assist him, nor one more trusty and faithful on that occasion than Cymon, the next night he had him privately into his chamber, where he spoke to him in this manner:

"Cymon, as the gods are the best and most liberal givers of all things to mankind, so are they also the ablest judges of our several virtues and merits: such then as they find to be firm and constant in every respect, them do they make worthy of the greatest things. Now concerning your worth and valour, they are willing to have more certain proof of both, than it was possible for you to shew whilst your life and actions were limited to the house of your father, whom I know to be a person of the greatest distinction; for first, by the subtle force of love, as I am informed, have they, from a mere insensible creature, made a man of you; and afterwards, by adverse fortune, and now, by a miserable imprisonment, are they willing to see if your soul be changed from what it was when you appeared flushed so lately with the prize you had won. If that continues the same, I can propose nothing so agreeable to you as what I am now going to offer; which, that you may resume your former might and valour, I shall immediately disclose. Pasimunda, overjoyed with your disappointment, and a zealous promoter, as far as in him lay, of your being put to death, is now about to celebrate his marriage with your Iphigenia, that he may enjoy that blessing, which Fortune, when she was favourable, first put in your power, and afterwards snatched away from you; but how this must afflict you, I can easily suppose by myself, who am like to undergo the same injury, and at the same time, with regard to my mistress Cassandra, who is to be married to his brother Ormisda. Now I see no remedy for either of us but what consists in our own resolution, and the strength of our arms: it will be necessary, therefore, to make our way with our swords, for each of us to gain his lady: if then you value—I will not say your liberty, because that, without her, would be of little weight with you; but, I say, if you value—your mistress, you need only follow me, and Fortune has put her into your hands."

These words spoke comfort to the drooping soul of Cymon, who immediately replied, "Lysimachus, you could never have a more stout, or a more trusty friend for such an enterprise than myself, if it be as you seem to promise: tell me

then what you would have me do, and you shall see me put it nobly into execution." Lysimachus made answer, "Three days hence the ladies are to be brought home to their espoused husbands, when you, with your friends and myself, and some people whom I can confide in, will go armed in the evening, and enter their house whilst they are in the midst of their mirth, where we will seize on the two brides, and carry them away to a ship which I have secretly provided, killing all that shall presume to oppose us."

This scheme was entirely to Cymon's liking, and he waited quietly till the time appointed. The wedding-day being now come, and every part of the house full of mirth and feasting, Lysimachus, after giving the necessary orders, at the time fixed, divided Cymon and his companions with his own friends into three parties, and putting arms under their several cloaks, and animating them boldly to pursue what they had undertaken, he sent one party to the haven to secure their escape, and went with the other two to Pasimunda's house; one party they stationed at the gate, to prevent any persons from shutting them up in the house; whilst he, along with Cymon, went up stairs with the remaining party. Coming then into the dining-room, where the two brides with many other ladies, were seated at supper, they advanced to them, and throwing down all the tables, seized each his lady, and giving them into the arms of their followers, ordered them to carry them away to their ship. The brides, as well as other ladies and servants, cried out so much, that immediately there was a great tumult. In the mean time, Cymon and Lysimachus, with their followers, drew their swords and came down stairs again without any opposition, till they met with Pasimunda, whom the noise had drawn thither, having in his hand a great club, when Cymon, at one stroke, laid him dead at his feet, and whilst Ormisda was running to his assistance, he was likewise killed by Cymon; and many others also of their friends, who came to their relief, were wounded and beaten back. Leaving the house then, all full of blood and confusion, they joined parties, and went directly to the ship with the booty, without the least hindrance whatever; when, putting the ladies on board, and they with all their friends following them, the shore was soon filled with crowds of people who came to rescue them, upon which they plied their oars and sailed joyfully away for Crete. There they were cheerfully received by all their friends and relations, when they espoused their

ladies, and were well pleased with their several prizes. This occasioned great quarrels afterwards between the two islands of Cyprus and Rhodes. At length, by the interposition of friends, everything was amicably adjusted, and then Cymon returned along with Iphigenia to Cyprus, and Lysimachus, in like manner, carried Cassandra back to Rhodes, where they lived very happily to the end of their days.

[It has been supposed that the original idea of this tale is to be found in an Idyllium of Theocritus, entitled, '*Βακολιοκος*;' but it is hardly possible that the novelist could have seen Theocritus at the date of the composition of the Decameron. Boccaccio himself affirms that he had read the account in the ancient histories of Cyprus; and Beroaldus, who translated this novel into Latin, also informs us that it is taken from the annals of the kingdom of Cyprus,—a fact which that writer might probably have ascertained from his intimacy with Hugo IV., king of that island. Besides the version by Beroaldus, this story was translated into English verse, about the year 1570, and has also been imitated, in his 'Cimon and Iphigenia,' by Dryden, who has in some degree softened the crimes of Cimon by representing Iphigenia as attached to him, and disinclined to the Rhodian; which is the reverse of the sentiments attributed to her by Boccaccio.]

NOVEL II.

Constantia is in love with Martuccio Gomito; and hearing that he was dead, out of despair goes alone into a boat, which is driven by the wind to Susa: finding him alive at Tunis, she makes herself known; whilst he, being a great favourite of the king's there, marries her, and returns home with her to Lipari, very rich.

THE queen, seeing that Pamfilo's novel was at an end, after praising it highly, ordered Emilia to follow. The latter began thus:—We are all of us justly pleased with such things as we see attended with rewards, according to our wishes; and forasmuch as love is more often deserving of happiness than misery, I shall obey the queen with a great deal more pleasure, by treating on the present subject, than I did the king, in discoursing of that of yesterday.

You must know, then, ladies, that near to Sicily, is a little island called Lipari, in which, not long since, lived a lady of a worthy family, named Constantia, with whom was in love a young gentleman of the same island, called Martuccio Gomito, one of an excellent character, and very eminent in

his way. She also had the same regard for him, so that she was never easy but when she saw him. He, therefore, desirous of marrying her, asked her father's consent, who replied, that as the suitor was in poor circumstances, he would never give it. Martuccio, grieved to see himself rejected on account of his poverty, fitted out a little vessel, with some of his friends and relations, and made a resolution never to return to Lipari till he should be rich. Sailing away, he cruised on the coasts of Barbary, taking everything of less force than himself that came in his way. Fortune was favourable enough to him, could he have set bounds to his desires; but not being satisfied, either he or his friends, with being very rich, and willing still to be more so, it happened that they were taken by some Saracen ships, after making a most obstinate defence, when being plundered of all they had gotten, and the greatest part of them slain, after sinking the ship, he was carried prisoner to Tunis, where he suffered a long and miserable confinement.

In the meantime news was brought to Lipari, from divers hands, that they were all drowned; which was such an affliction to the lady, that she resolved not to survive it; and not having the heart to make away with herself by any violent means, she chose to lay herself under a necessity of meeting with her death. Accordingly she went privately one night to the haven, where she found by chance a small fishing boat, at liberty from the other ships, and furnished with sails and oars. Getting into this, and having rowed a little way into the sea, she threw away her oars and rudder, and committed herself entirely to the mercy of the winds, supposing of necessity, that as the boat was empty, and nobody to steer it, either it must overset, or else dash against some rock, and so break to pieces; and that, in either case, she could not escape if she would. Wrapping her head then in a mantle, she laid herself down, weeping, at the bottom of the boat. But it happened differently from what she imagined; for it being a gentle north wind, and no sea, the boat rode it out all that night, and till the following evening, when it was brought within a hundred miles of Tunis, to a strand near a town called Susa; whilst the poor lady thought nothing either of her being near the land, or upon the wide sea, having never looked up from the time of her laying herself down, nor meaning ever to do so.

Now it happened, just as the boat struck against the shore, that a poor woman was taking away some nets which had

been drying in the sun. Perceiving the boat come full sail against the shore, and supposing the people to be all asleep in it, she stepped into it, and finding only this lady, she called several times to her before she could make her hear, she being fast asleep; and seeing by her dress that she was a Christian, she inquired of her in Latin, how it happened that she had arrived there in the boat all alone. The lady hearing her talk in Latin, was apprehensive that a different wind had driven her back to Lipari; and getting up, and looking all around her, without knowing anything of the country, she inquired where she was! The good woman replied, "Daughter, you are near Susa, in Barbary;" which the lady hearing, sorely lamented that she had not met with the death she had coveted; fearing also, with regard to her modesty, and not knowing what to do, she sat down, and began to weep. The good woman, seeing this, had pity on her, and after much persuasion brought her to her little hut, where she told her at length in what manner she had come thither. The good woman then finding that she was fasting, set coarse bread, with some dressed fish, and water before her, and prevailed upon her to eat a little.

Constantia now inquired of the good woman who she was, that she talked Latin so well? The hostess told her, that she was of Trapani, that her name was Carapresa, and that she was servant to some Christian fishermen. The lady hearing that name, and full of grief as she was, began to conceive some hope from it, yet could she give no account why, only that she thought she had heard the name before. Her desire to die was now much abated; and without telling the woman who she was, or whence she came, she begged of her to have pity on her youth, and give her such counsel as might enable her to avoid any injury that should be offered to her. The good woman left her in the hut, till she had taken care of her nets, when she covered her with her mantle, and conducted her to Susa, saying to her, "Constantia, I will bring you to the house of an old Saracen lady, whom I work for sometimes; she is very charitable, and I dare say, on my recommendation, will receive you, as though you were her own child; you must study then to oblige her as much as possible, till it shall please Heaven to send you better fortune." Accordingly, she did as she had promised.

The old lady, upon hearing the poor woman's account of Constantia, looked earnestly at her, and began to weep; she afterwards led her into the house, where she and some other

women lived together, without having a man amongst them, employing themselves in embroideries, and other kind of needle-work. In a few days she had learned to work in the same way, and behaved herself in such a manner that they were extremely delighted with her company; and at length she made herself mistress of their language. In this manner she continued at Susa, being given over at home for lost.

In the mean time it happened that one Mariabdela being in possession of the kingdom of Tunis, a young lord of great birth and power in the kingdom of Grenada also laid claim to it, and assembled a powerful army to drive him out of the country. This came to the ears of Martuccio Gomito, who was still in prison, and was well acquainted with the Berber language. Understanding, also, that the king had made great preparations for his defence, he said to one of his keepers, "Could I but speak to his majesty, my heart forebodes that I could give him such counsel as should assure him of victory." The keeper reported this to his master, and he immediately informed the king, who then sent for Martuccio, and demanded what counsel it was that he had to give him? "My lord," he replied, "if I am sufficiently acquainted, since I have been in this country, with your manner of fighting, it should seem to me as if you depended principally upon your archers: now if I can contrive a way whereby your enemies would want arrows, at the time that you had plenty of them, I suppose you will think then the battle would be yours."—"Without doubt," replied the king, "if you can do that, I shall make no question of being conqueror." Martuccio then added, "My lord, it may easily be done, if you please, and I will show you which way. You must have much finer cords made for your archers' bows than are commonly used; you must also have the notches of your arrows made to suit these small strings: but this must be done so privately that the enemy hear nothing of it, because they would then provide accordingly. Now the reason is this: after your enemies shall have discharged all their arrows, and likewise after your own bowmen shall have made an end of theirs, you know that they will then gather up your own darts, in order to shoot them back upon you, while your archers will do the same with theirs: but your arrows will be useless to the enemy, because those small notches will not suit their great strings; on the contrary, the slender cords of your archers will very well receive the large notches of their arrows; and thus your people will have plenty of darts, when

their adversaries shall be entirely unprovided." The king, who was a most wise lord, was pleased with the advice, and followed it, by which means he got the victory; Martuccio was consequently in high favour, and soon attained to great power and wealth.

These things were soon noised over the country; till at length Constantia heard that her lover, whom she had thought dead, was yet alive. The flame of her love, which had been so long extinct, now broke out afresh, and with greater vigour, and with it her hopes revived; insomuch, that she related all that had happened to her to the good lady, acquainting her that she desired to go to Tunis, there to satisfy her eyes with beholding what fame had long rung into her ears. The lady commended her design, and, as she had been hitherto a sort of mother to her, embarked with her. On arriving at Tunis, they were entertained together at the house of one of the old lady's relations; and Carapresa, whom they had carried with them, being sent to learn what she could about Martuccio, reported that he was alive, and in great repute. The lady then resolving that she would be the person to acquaint him that his Constantia was there, went one fine day to his house, and said to him, "Sir, one of your servants from Lipari is now a captive in my house, and has a desire to speak to you in private; for which purpose, that nobody might be intrusted with the secret, he desired that I would go myself to tell you." Martuccio gave her thanks, and followed her thither. As soon as the young lady saw him, she was perfectly overcome with joy, and being unable to refrain, threw her arms about his neck; whilst calling to mind her long sufferings and present transports, she burst out into a flood of tears. Martuccio stood some time in amazement, till at last he said, with a sigh, "O, my Constantia, are you alive? It is some time since I heard you were lost; nor have there been any tidings of you since." And, having said this, he embraced her with a great deal of tenderness and affection. She then related to him all that had befallen her, as well as the respect with which she had been honoured by the good lady: when, after much discourse together, he went straight to the king, and made him acquainted with the whole story, adding, that, with his consent, he intended to espouse her according to the manner of our laws.

The king was greatly surprised with the narration, and, sending for her, received the same account from her own

mouth. He then said, "Lady, you have well earned your husband;" then ordering many rich presents to be brought, he gave part to her, and part to him, and desired them to do what was most agreeable to themselves. Martuccio was very thankful to the lady who had entertained Constantia, and made her a suitable acknowledgment; and, taking their leave of her, not without many tears, they embarked—having Carapresa along with them—for Lipari, where they were received with inexpressible joy; and, the nuptials being celebrated with the greatest magnificence, they lived long together in the greatest tranquillity and comfort, enjoying the fruits of their mutual loves.

NOVEL III

Pietro Boccamazza, running away with his mistress, is set upon by thieves, whilst the lady makes her escape into a forest whence she is conducted to a castle. He is taken, but escapes by some accident, and arrives at the same castle, where they are married, and return thence to Rome.

THERE was not one among them all that did not applaud Emilia's novel. The queen, seeing that it was ended, turned to Eliza, and desired her to go on; she readily obeyed in this manner: I have a mind to relate a most melancholy night, as it happened to two lovers; but which, being succeeded by many happy days, is conformable enough to the subject proposed.

There lived at Rome, which was once the head, though now the tail of the world, a young gentleman of a good family, named Pietro Boccamazza, who was in love with a most beautiful lady, called Angelina, daughter to one Gigliuozzi Saullo, a plebian, but one well esteemed among his fellow citizens; and she, after some time, began to have the same regard for him. Weary of languishing longer for her, Pietro demanded her in marriage, which, as soon as his parents knew, they blamed him very much, and, at the same time, gave her father to understand, that they would have him take no notice of what the young spark might say upon that head; since, should he marry her, they would never own him more. Pietro, seeing himself disappointed in that manner, was ready to die with grief, and, could he but have prevailed upon her father, he would have married her in spite of them all. At last he thought of a scheme, which, if she would agree to it, would answer his purpose, and finding by a mes-

senger that she was willing, it was resolved between them to fly together from Rome. Having concerted measures for their departure, they set out one morning on horseback, towards Alagna, where he had some friends in whom he had the greatest confidence; when, not having time to marry, and making the best of their way, for fear of being pursued, it happened, after their riding about eight miles, that they missed their road, turning to the left, when they should have kept to the right. About two miles farther, they came in sight of a little castle, whence twelve men came rushing out upon them, whom she espying, but not till they were almost upon them, cried out, "Ride, Pietro, for we are attacked." Then, clapping spurs to her horse, and holding fast by the pummel of the saddle, she galloped full speed through the forest. Pietro, whose eyes were more upon his mistress than anything else, followed her as well as he could, till unawares he fell amongst the assailants, who seized and made him dismount. They inquired his name, and being told who he was, they said one to another, "This man is a friend to our enemies; let us strip and hang him up on one of these oaks, out of spite to the Orsini family." Having agreed upon this, they ordered him to undress himself, which he complied with, expecting nothing but death; when, on a sudden, an ambuscade of twenty-five others started up behind them, crying out aloud, "Kill them every man." Upon this they left Pietro, to prepare for their own defence; but, finding themselves outnumbered, they took to their heels, and the others followed hard after them.

Pietro, in the meantime, took his clothes, and getting on horseback again, rode as fast as he could the same way that Angelina had taken; but seeing no track or footsteps of any horse, and finding himself now out of the reach, as well of those who had first taken him, as of the others by whom those persons were attacked, and not being able to make out his Angelina he was almost distracted, and went up and down the forest, calling aloud to see if she could hear, but in vain. In this painful situation, he durst not turn back, and all before him he was ignorant of; besides, he was under perpetual apprehensions for them both, on account of the wild beasts which are in those places, and fancied every moment that he saw some bear or wolf tear her to pieces. In this manner did poor Pietro traverse the forest over and over, hallooing and shouting, and frequently coming back again, when he thought he was going forwards all the time;

until, what with his fatigue, and his fright and long fasting, he was quite spent. Perceiving now the night coming upon him, and not knowing what else to do, he tied his horse to an oak tree, and got up into it to secure himself from the wild beasts; whilst the moon rising soon after, and it being a fine clear night, he sat there sighing and lamenting his hard fortune all the night long, not daring to sleep for fear of falling down, or if he had been in a place more commodious his great grief and care for his mistress would not have suffered him to rest.

The young lady, in the mean time, as we before observed, was carried so far into the wood that she could not find the way out again: therefore, she went up and down full of grief for what had happened. At last, seeing nothing of Pietro, and getting into a little path, as it was now towards the evening, she followed it so long, that in about two miles it brought her in sight of a little hut, to which she rode as fast as she could, and found therein a very old man and his wife; who on seeing her, said, "Daughter, what do you in this country at this time of day?" She wept, and replied, that she had lost her company in the wood, and inquired how near she was to Alagna. The honest man made answer—"Daughter, this is not the way; it is more than twelve miles from us."—"And how far is it," she said, "to any inn, where I may go to lodge?"—"There is none near enough for you to go to by night."—"For Heaven's sake," quoth the lady, "as I can go nowhere else, will you please to give me a lodging?"—"Daughter, you shall be very welcome; but I must acquaint you that there are companies of people, both friends and enemies, continually passing this way, who do us great injury sometimes; and should any of them find you here, they might offer rudeness, and we not have it in our power to help you. I apprise you of this, that you may lay no blame upon us, if such a thing should happen." The lady, seeing it was late, though she was terrified by the old man's words, said, "I trust to God for my protection, as to what you mention; but if that should happen, I may expect more mercy from men than from beasts." She then dismounted and went to supper with them upon such poor diet as they had, and afterwards lay down upon their bed with her clothes on, lamenting her own misfortune and her lover's all the night, not knowing whether she had more cause to hope or fear on his account.

About break of day, she heard a great noise of people on

horseback, and immediately she rose, and went into a great yard behind the house, in one corner of which was a stack of hay, and there hid herself. This was no sooner done than a knot of thieves was at the door, which was instantly opened to them, and seeing there the lady's horse and saddle, they asked whom it belonged to? The honest man, seeing nothing of her, made answer, "Nobody is here; but this horse came to us last night, having got away, I suppose, from his owner, and we took him in that he should not be devoured by the wolves."—"Then," quoth the captain, "as he has no master, he shall be ours." The gang dispersed up and down the house and yard, laying down their lances and targets, and one of them by chance thrust his lance into the hay where Angelina had hid herself, and was so near killing her, that she was on the point of crying out, for it pierced her clothes; but recollecting herself, she resolved to lie still. In the mean time they fell to boiling some kids and other meat that they had brought with them, and after they had ate and drunk, they went about their business, carrying off the horse. When they were some distance from the house, the honest man began to inquire of his wife what was become of the lady, as he had never seen her since he rose. "She could not tell," she said, and went all about to seek for her. The lady meanwhile finding that the men were gone, came forth from her hiding-place. The old man was much pleased to find that she had not fallen into their hands, and said to her, "It is now daylight, we will go with you therefore to a castle about five miles off, where you may be in safety; but you will be obliged to travel on foot, for these sorry fellows have taken your horse away." She was under no great concern for that loss, but set forward with them at once, and they arrived there betimes in the morning. Now the castle belonged to one of the family of the Orsini, whose name was Liello di Campo di Fiore, and by great good fortune his lady was then there, a worthy good woman, who, seeing Angelina, soon recollected her, and received her with the utmost respect, inquiring by what means she had come thither. She then related the whole story: and Liello's lady, who knew Pietro, as a friend of her husband's was under great concern, supposing him to be dead; and said to Angelina, "As it happens that you know not where Pietro is, you shall stay with me till I have an opportunity of conveying you safe to Rome."

Now as for Pietro, he had but a dismal night of it, for he

soon saw his horse surrounded with a number of wolves, which made him break his bridle, and endeavour to make his escape, but he was so encompassed that he could not, and defended himself with kicking and biting for some time, till at last he was pulled down, and torn all to pieces, and the wolves having devoured him to the very bones went away. This was a sore affliction to Pietro, who expected much from his horse, after all the fatigue that he had undergone; and he began now to despair of ever getting out of the forest. It being at this time almost day, and he nearly dead with cold, as he was looking about him, he chanced to spy a fire at last about a mile off; when it was quite light, therefore, he descended from the tree, not without a great deal of fear, and directing his course thither, he found some shepherds making merry together, who received him out of mere compassion. After he had ate and warmed himself, he related his whole adventure, and inquired whether there was no town or castle in those parts that he could go to. The shepherds told him, that three miles off was a castle belonging to Liello di Campo di Fiore, whose lady was then there. He entreated some of them to go with him, and two readily offered their service. Being arrived, he was known, and as he was going to send out to seek his mistress, he was called by the lady of the castle, and, on stepping up to her, he beheld Angelina, which made him the happiest man in the world; and if he was thus transported, she was no less so. The lady, after giving them a handsome reception, and hearing what had happened to both, began to reprimand him for attempting to do what was so disagreeable to his parents; but seeing him resolved, and finding that he was agreeable to the lady, she said, "What should I trouble myself for? They like each other, and are both my husband's friends; besides, it seems as if Providence would have it so, seeing that one escaped from being hanged, the other from being stabbed by a lance, and both from being devoured by wild beasts. Then let it be done." Turning to them now, she said, "If you are resolved to be man and wife, I am content, and will celebrate the wedding at my husband's expense: afterwards I will undertake to make peace between you and your friends." So they were married in the castle, to their great joy, and with all the magnificence that the country could afford: and in a few days the lady took them both to Rome, where she contrived to reconcile Pietro and his parents, who were much enraged at what he had done. He

lived afterwards with Angelina, in all peace and happiness, to a good old age.

[This, though an insipid story of itself, is curious, as presenting us with the rudiments of a modern romance of the school of Mrs. Radcliffe.]

NOVEL IV.

Ricciardo Manardi is found by Lizio along with his daughter, whom he marries, and they become reconciled.

Eliza was listening to the commendations which her novel had excited, when the queen laid the next charge on Filostrato, who smiled, and began in this manner:—I have been so often lashed by you for giving a harsh and melancholy subject, that, by way of recompense, I think myself obliged to say something which will make you laugh: I shall therefore relate a love affair, which, after being attended with nothing worse than a few sighs and a short fright, mingled with some shame, was brought to a happy ending; and all this shall be told in the compass of a very short novel.

Not long since there lived in Romagna a worthy and accomplished knight, named Lizio da Valbona, who had, in his old age, by his lady, Madam Giacomina, a daughter, the most beautiful young lady in all the country. Being their only child, they were extremely tender and careful of her, thinking through her to make some grand alliance. Now there was a young gentleman, of a very agreeable person, one of the Manardi, of Brettinoro, Ricciardo by name, who used to come much to their house. Lizio and his lady were under no further apprehensions from him than they would have been from their own son; but often seeing their daughter, and being charmed with her person and behaviour, he fell secretly in love, which, she perceiving, soon delighted him exceedingly, by returning his affection. He was often desirous of speaking to her, yet could never dare to do it; till, at length, he had one day opportunity, and enough courage, to say, "Pray, Caterina, let me not die for love." She instantly replied, "Would to Heaven you would show me the like mercy!" Overjoyed by this encouragement, he rejoined, "I shall study your will and pleasure in everything; do you find a way to make us happy together." "You see, Ricciardo, how I am watched," she answered, "and, therefore, I am unable to contrive the means for your

coming to me; but if you can think of any method to do it, without bringing disgrace upon me, tell me, and I shall be very glad." After mature consideration, "My dearest Caterina," he said, "I see no other way, but for you to get leave to sleep in the gallery, which looks towards the garden, and if I knew when that happened, I would certainly contrive to get to you, however great the height from the ground." "If you have the courage to come," she replied, "I think I can manage so as to sleep there." He promised to do so, and for the present they parted.

The following day, it being about the end of May, Caterina complained grievously to her mother, that the heat had been so excessive the night before, that she could not get a wink of sleep. "Why daughter," said the mother, "you talk of heat, I do not find the weather so sultry."—"Madam, there is some difference between old people and young."—"That may be; but can I change the seasons? You must bear with the time of year as it is: another night it may be more temperate, and then you will sleep better."—"I wish it might," said Caterina, "but the nights are not used to grow cooler, the more the summer advances."—"Then," said the mother, "what would you have me do for you?" She replied, "If you and my father please, I would gladly lie in the gallery adjoining your room, which looks towards the garden; there I shall have plenty of fresh air, and hear the nightingale, and it will be much more pleasant than lying in your chamber."—"Well, my dear," said the old lady, "I will speak to your father about it, and we will do as he thinks best." Accordingly she mentioned the matter to Lizio, who being old, was apt to be a little testy, and he said, "What nightingale is this she talks of? I shall make her sleep to the singing of a cricket." Caterina hearing this, kept awake the next night, more through vexation than heat, and was not only restless herself, but kept her mother also from sleeping. The next morning the old lady complained to her husband, saying, "You shew very little regard for your daughter; what does her lying in the gallery signify to you? She did not rest at all last night for the heat. And as to her fancy about the nightingale, she is young, let her have her way." "Then make her a bed there," he replied, "if you will, and let her hear the nightingale." A bed, therefore, was ordered to be set up for her, which she gave Ricciardo to understand, by a concerted signal, and he at once knew what part he had to act. When she was gone to bed, Lizio

locked the door that opened out of his chamber into the gallery, and then went to rest himself.

As soon as everything was still, Ricciardo got upon the wall, by help of a scaling ladder; then laying hold of the joinings of another wall, he climbed at last (not without great difficulty, as well as danger had he fallen) to the gallery, where the lady had long been expecting him, and welcomed him with the greatest delight imaginable. They passed a delicious night, and the nightingale sang ever so many times. Heated at last by the weather and their sport, they fell asleep without any covering over them, Caterina having her right arm under her lover's neck, and holding in her left hand what modesty forbids me to name before ladies. The night being short, and further spent than they supposed, they lay fast asleep in that way till daylight, when Messer Lizio got out of bed. As soon as he rose, he began to think of his daughter, and, opening the door softly, he said, "Let us see how the nightingale has made Caterina sleep." Going then into the gallery, and drawing the curtains, he found Ricciardo and her asleep together: upon this he stepped back, and woke up his wife, saying, "Up with you! Make haste! Come, and see how fond your daughter is of the nightingale. She has caught it and has it fast in her hand, I tell you." Dressing herself as fast as she could, she followed her husband, and seeing the pair together in that manner, was going to give Ricciardo all the hard words she could think of; but Lizio said, "Hush! not a word, I charge you; make no noise about it; as he has now got her, he shall keep her: he is of a good family, as well as rich, so we cannot have a better son-in-law. If he means to go off in a whole skin, he shall marry her before I part with him; and so he'll find he has put the nightingale in his own cage, and not another's." The wife on this was a little comforted, and the more so as she saw that her daughter had passed a pleasant night, slept very sound, and had caught the nightingale; so she held her peace.

Soon after this debate, Ricciardo chanced to wake, and seeing it broad day-light, was frightened out of his wits, and waking Caterina, he said, "Alas! my life, what shall we do? the day-light has surprised me here with you?" At these words Lizio stepped from behind the curtain, and said, "We shall do well enough." Ricciardo's heart was in his mouth at seeing him, and sitting up in bed, he said, "For Heaven's sake, sir, forgive me; I confess that I deserve to die; there-

fore, you may do with me as you please: yet, if it be possible, I pray you to spare my life." Lizio replied, "Ricciardo, my friendship for you did not deserve such a return as I have met with: but since it is so, you have only one way whereby you may save your life and my honour, that is to marry her; either do that, or else make your peace with Heaven, for here you shall die." Meanwhile, Caterina let go the nightingale, and, covering herself up, began to cry and sob, beseeching her father to forgive Ricciardo, and Ricciardo to do what her father required. There was no need of many words: the fear of death, as well as his love for Caterina, soon made Ricciardo come to a decision, and he told Lizio that he was ready to comply. Lizio then took his wife's ring, and caused him instantly to espouse Caterina, which being done, he desired the new married couple to take their own time for rising, as they probably had need of repose. The nightingale had sung six times in the night, but they had two more ditties before they got up. That morning Lizio and his son-in-law had some farther discourse together, and everything being settled to the satisfaction of all parties, the marriage was some days afterwards celebrated in the most public manner with great demonstrations of joy. Ricciardo took his wife home, and they lived together, from that time, in all peace and comfort, and went nightingale catching by day and by night as often as they had a mind.

[The characters in this tale are mentioned by Dante, in his 'Purgatory.' A spirit, complaining of the degeneracy of the Italians, exclaims:

"Ov'è 'l buon Lizio e Arrego Manardi!"—*c.* 14.

This demonstrates the existence of these persons, whence Manni, in his 'Commentary' infers, according to his usual process of reasoning that the incident related by Boccaccio must have actually occurred. In fact, however, it is derived from one of the ancient Armorican tales of Marie, entitled 'Lai de Laustri,' which, in the Breton language, signified nightingale. The only modern imitation of this tale is, 'Le Rossignol,' usually published in the Contes et Nouvelles of La Fontaine, but of which there is some reason to believe he was not the author.]

NOVEL V.

Guidotto da Cremona dying, left a daughter to the care of Giacomino da Pavia. Giannole di Severino and Minghino di Mingole are both in love with her, and fight on her account, when she is found to be Giannole's sister, and is married to Minghino.

The ladies laughed, as if they would never give over, at the story of the nightingale. As soon as their merriment was a little abated, the queen turned to Filostrato, and said, "If you gave us concern with your subject of yesterday, you have made ample amends by your last story; therefore you shall hear no more from us on that score." She then turned to Neifile, who began in this manner:—As Filostrato lays his scene in Romagna, I intend to have my novel also from that quarter.

In the city of Fano dwelt two Lombards, one named Guidotto da Cremona, and the other Giacomino da Pavia, both advanced in years, and men who had lived as soldiers all their days. Guidotto, being at the point of death, and having no son, nor any friend in whom he put greater confidence than in Giacomino, after settling all his affairs, he left to his care a daughter of about ten years of age, with the management of his whole substance. In the mean time, the city of Faenza, which had long been embroiled in wars and confusion, being now brought into a more flourishing state, and every one that pleased having leave to return; it chanced that Giacomino, who had formerly lived there, and liked the place, went back with all his effects, carrying with him this young lady, whom he loved and treated as his own child, and who, as she grew up, became the most celebrated beauty in the whole city, and as accomplished in all respects as she was fair. Accordingly she began to be admired by divers young gentlemen; but two especially, of equal fortunes, were so much in love, than an utter hatred commenced between them for her sake; one was called Giannole di Severino, and the other Minghino di Mingole. Either of these gentlemen would gladly have married her, she being now fifteen; but, finding themselves rejected by her friends, they resolved to try other means of obtaining her.

Giacomino had in his house an old maid-servant, and a man called Crivello, a facetious, as well as an honest person, with whom Giannole was acquainted, and to whom he made

known his love, offering at the same time a great reward, if, by his assistance, he should in any way obtain his desire. Said Crivello, "The only thing I can do for you in this matter is to bring you where she is when my master is gone out to sup some where; for were I to put in a word for you, she would never give me the hearing; if you like this, I dare promise you so far, afterwards you may do what you think most proper." Giannole told him, he desired no more. On the other part Minghino made his court to the maid, who had delivered several messages to the lady in his favour, and given her a good opinion of him: she had also undertaken to introduce him the first evening that Giacomino happened to be abroad. Soon after this it happened that Giacomino was invited out by Crivello's contrivance, who immediately gave notice to Giannole, and arranged with him that he should come, upon a certain signal being given, when he should find the door open. In like manner the maid, being unacquainted with this, informed Minghino of the same thing, adding, that, upon observing a certain token, he should then come into the house.

In the evening the two lovers, knowing nothing of one another's intention, but yet each jealous of his rival, came with some friends armed for their greater security. Minghino waited at a friend's in the neighbourhood to watch for the sign, whilst Giannole, with his people, stood a little distance from the house. Meanwhile, Crivello and the maid were each contriving how to send the other out of the way. "Why do you not go to bed?" said he, "what are you doing about the house?" "Why do not you go to your master?" she retorted. "You have had your supper. What do you stay for, then?" But neither of them would budge. At last Crivello, knowing the time to be come that he had appointed, said to himself, "What need I care for this woman? If she will not hold her tongue, I will find a way to make her." Giving the signal, then, he went to open the door, when Giannole, with two of his companions, immediately rushed in, and finding the lady in the hall, they seized, and were going to carry her off: she, however, defended herself as well as she could, crying out loudly, as did also the maid. Minghino, perceiving this, ran thither with his party, and seeing them bear her away, they drew their swords, and called out aloud, "Traitors, ye are all dead men; it shall never be so. What violence is this?" And with these words, they fell pell-mell upon them. The neighbours also

were soon up in arms, and blaming such proceedings, took part with Minghino. After a long skirmish, Minghino took the lady away from Giannole, and brought her back to Giacomino's house. Nor was the fray at an end till the city officers came, and seized many of the persons concerned, and amongst the rest Minghino, Giannole, and Crivello, and carried them to prison.

As soon as things were a little quieted, and Giacomino returned, he became very uneasy at what had happened, till hearing that his ward was not in fault, he was better satisfied; but resolved, for fear of the like accidents in future, to marry her as soon as possible. In the morning the parents of both the young men having heard the truth of the story, and being sensible of the evil which might ensue to their sons, who were in custody, should Giacomino proceed rigorously against them, they came to him, and entreated him not to regard so much the injury which he had received from the little indiscretion of the young men, as the esteem and friendship which, they hoped, he bore towards themselves, who now requested this favour at his hands; submitting themselves, and the youths also who had committed the offence, to make any satisfaction he should insist upon. Giacomino, who had seen much of the world, and was a person of understanding, answered in few words,—"Gentlemen, were I in my own country, as I am now in yours, I hold myself so much your friend, that I should do this or any thing else to oblige you; but in this respect I am the more ready to do it, as the offence is now committed against yourselves. For this lady is not, as many may think, either of Cremona or Pavia, but of Faenza; although neither myself, nor she, nor yet the person who bequeathed her to me, knew whose daughter she was; everything then shall be done according to your desire." The honest men hearing that she was of Faenza, began to wonder; and after thanking him for his gracious reply, they desired he would be so kind as to tell them in what manner she came into his hands, and how he knew that she was of Faenza. He replied, "Guidotto da Cremona was my very good friend and companion, and as he lay upon his deathbed, he told me, that when this city was taken by the Emperor Frederick, and given to be pillaged by the soldiers, he and some others went into a house full of rich booty, which was forsaken by the owners, only this girl, who seemed then but two years old, was left behind, and she seeing him go up stairs, called "Papa!" for which reason he took pity on her,

and brought her away, with everything that was of value in the house, to Fano. On his death-bed there, he left her in charge to me, desiring, when she should be of age, that I would bestow her in marriage, and give what was her own, by way of fortune. Since she has been grown up, however, I have met with nobody that I thought a fit match for her, otherwise I would willingly dispose of her, lest the like accident should happen again, as befell us last night."

At this time there was present one Gulielmino da Medicini, who was with Guidotto in that expedition, and knew very well whose house it was that he had plundered, and seeing that person in the company, he accosted him, and said, "Bernarbuccio, do you hear what Giacomino has been talking of?"—"Yes," he replied, "and I am now thinking about it; for in that confusion I remember to have lost a daughter about the same age that he speaks of."—"Then," said Gulielmino, "it is certainly the same; for I was there at that time, and heard Guidotto relate how he plundered such a house, when I knew it must be yours: see, therefore, if you can call to mind any mark that she had, whereby you may know her, for she is plainly your daughter." He then remembered that she had a scar like a cross under her left ear, and he desired Giacomino to take him to his house, that he might convince himself by seeing her. Accordingly, he brought him thither very willingly, when the very first sight of her put him in mind of her mother; but not regarding that, he told Giacomino, that he should take it as a favour if he might turn aside the hair from her left ear; which being permitted, he found the same mark, and was convinced that she was his daughter: he then said to Giacomino, "Brother, this is my daughter; it was my house that Guidotto pillaged, when this child was forgotten by her mother, in our great hurry, and we supposed that she was burnt along with the house." The lady hearing this, and seeing him to be a person of gravity, moved also perhaps by a secret instinct, she easily gave credit to it, and both of them burst into tears. Bernarbuccio then sent for her mother, and her other relations, and after relating what had happened, he carried her home, to the great joy of them all, as well as to the satisfaction of Giacomino; whilst the governor of the city, who was a worthy man, knowing that Giannole, whom he had in custody, was son to Bernarbuccio, and the lady's own brother, resolved to overlook the crime he had committed. Conversing then with Bernarbuccio and Giacomino about it, he un-

dertook to make peace between Giannole and Minghino, to whom, by the consent of all parties, he gave her to wife, and set all the other people at liberty. Minghino then made a most sumptuous wedding, and carried his bride home in great state where they lived happily together for a long course of years.

[This story is related by Tonducci, in his 'History of Faenza,' and had been previously told in an old Latin chronicle.]

NOVEL VI.

Gianni di Procida is discovered with a young lady, formerly his mistress, but then given to King Frederick, for which he is condemned to be burnt with her at a stake, when being known by Ruggieri dell' Oria, he escapes and marries her.

Neifile's agreeable novel being ended, Pampinea received an order to proceed, and quickly raising her lovely countenance, she thus began:—Great, most gracious ladies, is the force of love, which often leads people to rash and perilous attempts, as you have heard set forth in divers instances, both now and heretofore, and as I shall further evince in what I am going to relate concerning an enamoured youth.

Ischia is an island near Naples, in which lived a beautiful young lady named Restituta, daughter to a certain gentleman called Marin Bolgaro. A young gentleman of Procida, called Gianni, was in love with her, and she had the same affection for him. Not a day passed but he would go to Ischia to see her, and frequently in the night; if he could not get a boat, he would swim over, though it was only to please himself with a sight of her house. Whilst his love continued thus fervent, it chanced that she was walking out one summer's day on the sea-shore, and passing from one rock to another, picking up shells, she came near a grotto, where some young Sicilians, just come from Naples, were assembled together, partly for the sake of the shade, and partly for the fresh water, of which there was a cool and pleasant spring. They, seeing her by herself (whilst she was not aware of their presence), agreed to seize and carry her away. Accordingly they surprised her, took her to their ship, although she made a great outcry, and sailed off with her. Being arrived at Calabria, a dispute arose as to which of them should have her: and, as they could not come to

any agreement about her amongst themselves, it was at last thought convenient to remove all cause of dissention by making a present of her to Frederick, king of Naples, who was young, and addicted to pleasure. They took her accordingly to Palermo, and presented her to the king, who was greatly pleased with her; but being a little indisposed at that time, he had her sent to a pleasant seat built in one of his gardens, called La Cuba, to be kept there till his strength was recruited.

The lady's abduction made a great noise all over Ischia, and so much the more as the persons concerned were unknown. But Gianni, who was more particularly interested in the affair, never expecting to hear any tidings of her there, and understanding which way the vessel had steered, got another ready, and went all along the sea-coast, from Minerva to Scalea, in Calabria, to inquire after her; and at this last place he was told, that she was carried by some Sicilian sailors to Palermo. Thither then he went, with all possible speed, and after much inquiry, he found that she was presented to the king, and kept for his purpose in La Cuba. This gave him infinite concern, and he began to despair, not only of getting her back, but even of ever seeing her more. He sent his frigate home, but being detained by his love, he resolved to stay there, as nobody knew him. As he passed pretty often in sight of the house, they chanced one day to spy each other through the window, to the intense joy of both. Seeing that the place was private, he got near enough to speak to her, and being instructed by her what course to take, if he desired to have a nearer interview, he left her for that time, taking particular notice of the situation of the place, and waiting for night. When a good part of that was spent, he returned, and clambering over the walls which seemed inaccessible, he made his way into the garden, where finding a long piece of timber, he set it against the window, and, by the help of it, got into the chamber. The lady, reflecting that she had lost her honour, of which she had before been very tenacious, and believing that she could bestow her favours on none who deserved them better, was the less scrupulous in this affair, and had left the casement open on purpose for him. She now begged earnestly of him, that he would contrive some method to get her thence, and he promised to order everything so that the next time he came he should take her away. This being agreed, he went and lay down on the bed by her.

In the meantime, the king, being much smitten with her beauty, and finding himself recovered, had a mind, though it was far in the night, to go and spend some time with her. Coming, therefore, with a few servants, to the house, and going softly to the chamber where he knew she was, to his great surprise he saw Gianni and her asleep together. This provoked him to that degree, that he was on the point of putting both to death; till, reflecting that it would be base in any person, and more so in a king, to kill people unarmed and asleep, he held his hand, but resolved to make a public example of them, and burn them alive. Turning to one of his retinue, he said, "What do you think of this base woman, on whom I had fixed all my hopes?" Then he inquired if they knew the man who had the assurance to come there to commit such an outrage; but none remembered ever to have seen him before. The king upon this went away greatly disturbed, commanding that as soon as it was light they should be brought bound to Palermo, when they were to be tied back to back, and kept there till three o'clock, for everybody to see them, and then to be burnt, as they deserved. Accordingly they were seized and bound without the least remorse or pity; and being brought, as the king had ordered, to Palermo, they were tied to a stake in the great square, surrounded with faggots ready to burn them at the time appointed: whilst all the people of the city flocked to see the sight, the women greatly pitying and commending the man, the men also shewing the same regard for the poor woman, every one highly admiring her most extraordinary beauty. But the two lovers stood with their eyes fixed on the ground, lamenting their hard fate, and waiting every moment for their sentence to be put in execution.

Whilst they were kept in this manner, till the time fixed upon, the news was carried to Ruggieri dell' Oria, a person of great worth and valour, who was the king's high admiral; and he coming to the place, cast his eye first upon the lady, and praised her beauty very much. He then turned to Gianni, whom he soon recognised, and asked him if he was not Gianni di Procida? Gianni lifted up his eyes, and remembering the admiral, said, "I was once that person; but now I am to be no more." The admiral then inquired what it was had brought him to this? Gianni replied, "Love and the king's displeasure." The admiral made him tell the whole story, and as he was going away, Gianni called him back, and said, "My lord, if it be possible, pray obtain one

favour of his majesty for me." Ruggieri asked what that was? Gianni made answer, "I find that I am to die without delay; therefore I only beg that, as I am tied with my back to this lady, whom I have loved dearer than my own life, and am not able to see her, that we may be bound with our faces to each other, and so I may expire with the pleasure of looking upon her." Ruggieri laughed, and said, "I will take care that you shall see her to much better purpose."

He then commanded those who had the care of the execution to respite it till farther orders, and went directly to the king. Finding him a good deal out of temper, he spared not to speak his mind to this effect:—"My liege, what have these two young people done to offend you, whom you have now ordered to be burnt?" The king told him. Ruggieri then said, "their crime may deserve it, but not from you; if misdeeds require punishment, no less do benefits demand rewards, as well as thanks. Do you know who they are whom you have sentenced to be burnt?" The king answered, "No."—"Then," said he, "I will tell you, that you may see how unwisely you suffer yourself to be transported with passion. The young man is son to Landolfo, the brother of Gianni di Procida, by whose means you are lord of Sicily. The lady is daughter to Marin Bolgaro, whose influence it was that secured your dominion over Ischia. Besides, they have long loved each other; and it was this, and no disrespect to your highness, that put them upon committing the crime, if crime it may be called, for which you are going to make them suffer death, instead of which you ought rather to give them some noble reward.

The king hearing this, and being assured that the admiral spoke nothing but truth, not only put a stop to the proceedings, but was grieved for what he had done: he therefore ordered that the lovers should be set at liberty, and brought before him. Then hearing their whole case, he resolved to make them amends for the injury they had received; and giving them noble apparel, and many royal presents, he had them married, as it was their mutual desire, and afterwards sent them home thoroughly satisfied with their good fortune, which they long happily enjoyed together.

[This seems partly an historical tale; it is uninteresting in itself, but contains an incident which appears to have suggested to Tasso the punishment of Olindo and Sophronia, who are tied back to back to a stake, and

are about to be burned in this posture, when rescued by the arrival and intercession of Clorinda. Like Gianni di Procida, Olindo cries out, in the crisis of his fate:

"Ed oh mia morte avventurosa appieno,
Oh fortunati miei dolci martiri,
S' impetrero che giunto seno a seno
L' anima mia ne la tua bocca io spiri!
E venendo tu meco a un tempo meno
In me fuor mandi gli ultimi sospiri."—*Gerus. Lib.*, c. 2.]

NOVEL VII.

Teodoro is in love with Violante, his master's daughter; she proves with child, for which he is condemned to be hanged: when being led out to execution, he is recognised by his father, set at liberty, and afterwards marries her.

The ladies were some time in suspense, through fear lest the two lovers should be burnt, and thanked Heaven at last to hear of their deliverance. Then the queen gave the next command to Lauretta, who began cheerfully as follows:

When good King Guiglielmo ruled over Sicily, there lived in that island a gentleman named Amerigo, abbot of Trapani, who amongst other temporal goods, was well stored with children. Having occasion for servants, and meeting with some Genoese pirates from the Levant, who had been coasting along Armenia, and taken several children, supposing them to be Turks, he bought some, and, amongst the rest, in appearance chiefly peasants, one of a more generous aspect, called Teodoro. This boy, as he grew up, though he was treated as a servant, was educated with Amerigo's own children; and his natural disposition was so good and agreeable to his master, that he had him baptized, and called him Pietro, making him overseer of his affairs.

Amongst Amerigo's children was a daughter, named Violante, a most beautiful young lady, who, having been kept from marrying longer than was agreeable to her, cast her eye at last upon Pietro, being charmed with his behaviour, though she was ashamed to make such a discovery. But love spared her this trouble; for he, by often looking cautiously at her, was so far captivated, that he was always uneasy unless he saw her: at the same time he was fearful lest any one should perceive it, as thinking it a sort of crime. This she soon

took notice of; and, to give him a little more assurance, let him understand that it was not displeasing to her. Thus they went on together, neither venturing to speak to the other, though it was what they both desired. But whilst they thus mutualy languished, fortune, as if purposely, found means to banish this bashfulness, which had hitherto been in the way.

Amerigo had a country house about a mile from Trapani, whither his wife and daughter, together with other ladies, used to go sometimes, by way of pastime. One day when they were there, having taken Pietro along with them, it happened that the sky was overcast all at once with clouds, on which account the lady and her friends made all possible haste home again, before they should be caught in the storm. But Pietro and the young lady, being more nimble than the rest, had got considerably the start of them, as much perhaps through love, as fear of the weather; and when they were out of sight, there came such claps of thunder, attended with a violent storm of hail, that the mother and her company were glad to get into a labourer's house, whilst Pietro and the young lady, having no other place of refuge, went into an old uninhabited cottage, which had just cover enough remaining to keep them dry; and there they were obliged to stand pretty close together. This event encouraged him to open his heart, and he said, "Would to Heaven the storm would never cease, that I might continue here always in this manner!"—"I should like it," she replied, "well enough." These words brought on some little acts of fondness, which were followed by others, till at last they grew very familiar together, had their fill of pleasure, and made arrangements for the continuance of an intercourse so happily begun.

The shower being over, they went on towards the city, waiting by the way for the mother, who having joined them, they came with her home. They had frequent meetings from that time, conducted always with great secrecy, till at length, she proved with child, which terribly alarmed them both. On this, Pietro, being in fear for his life, resolved to fly, and told her so. She replied, "If you do that, I will certainly murder myself." Pietro, then, who loved her most affectionately, said, "Why would you have me stay?" There must soon be a discovery; for your part, you will be easily forgiven, and I shall have to bear the punishment of both." —"Pietro," she replied, "my crime must be known; but as for yours, be assured, unless you tell it yourself, it never

shall."—"Then," quoth he, "if you promise me that, I will stay; but be sure you observe it." The young lady, who had concealed as long as possible her being with child, finding it could be kept a secret no longer, let her mother at last into the truth, entreating her protection with abundance of tears. The mother was very harsh with her, and insisted upon knowing how it happened: when she, to keep her word with Pietro, feigned a long story about it, to which the other easily gave credit, and, to keep it private, sent her away to one of their farm-houses.

When the time of her labour was at hand, the mother, never suspecting anything of her husband's coming, it chanced that Amerigo, returning that way from hawking, thought, as he passed under the window, that he heard something of a noise and bustle above, and when he came in he inquired what was the matter? The lady told her husband, with a great deal of concern, what had happened to their daughter. But he, not quite so credulous as herself, said it was impossible that she should be with child, and not know by whom, and he insisted upon knowing it: by that means she might regain his favour, otherwise he would put her to death without the least mercy. The lady tried all she could to make him satisfied with her story, but to no purpose. He ran with his sword drawn to his daughter, who, whilst they had been in discourse together, had brought forth a boy, and said, "Either declare the father, or thou shalt die instantly." She, terrified to death, broke her promise to Pietro, and made a full discovery. He was so enraged at this, that he could scarcely forbear murdering her, till having vented something of his passion, he remounted his horse, and returned to Trapani, when, making his complaint to one Signor Currado, who was governor there for the king, of the injury Pietro had done him, he had him apprehended, and he confessed the whole affair.

Pietro was condemned to be whipped, and afterwards hanged; and that the same hour might put an end to the lives of both the lovers and of their child, Amerigo, whose anger was not to be appeased by Pietro's death, sent a cup of poison, and a naked sword, by one of his servants, to his daughter, saying, "Go carry these two things to Violante, and tell her from me, that she must take her choice, whether to die by poison, or the sword; and if she refuse, I will have her burnt publicly as she deserves: when you have done this, take her child and dash his brains out, and then throw him

to the dogs." The fellow, more disposed to such wickedness than to anything that was good, went readily enough about his errand.

Pietro was whipped in pursuance of his sentence, and as he was led along to the gallows, he chanced to pass by an inn, where lodged three noblemen of Armenia, who were sent as ambassadors by their king to the pope, to treat of some weighty affairs with regard to an expedition which he was going to make. There they stayed to repose themselves after their journey, and had great honour shown them by the nobility of Trapani, and especially by Amerigo. Observing the people pass by who were leading Pietro, they went to the window to see what was the matter. Pietro stood stripped to the waist, with his hands tied behind him; when one of the ambassadors, named Fineo, an ancient person, and one of great authority, looking at him, saw a red spot on his breast, which children are sometimes born with, and immediately was put in mind of a son who had been stolen from him by some pirates, fifteen years before, of whom he could never since learn any tidings. Judging by Pietro's looks that he must be about the same age as his lost boy, he began to suspect, from the mark, that he was the very person, and if so, he supposed he would remember his own name, and his father's, as also something of the Armenian language: therefore, being near him, he called out "Teodoro!" Hearing that, Pietro lifted up his head. Fineo then spoke to him in the Armenian language, saying, "Whence do you come, and whose son are you?" The officers who had charge of him, stopped, out of respect to that worshipful person, and Pietro replied, "I am of Armenia, the son of one Fineo, and was brought hither by I know not whom."

Fineo, now convinced that he was his son, came down with his friends, full of tears, and ran to embrace him among all the officers; then throwing a rich mantle over his shoulders, he desired the person who led him to wait till orders should come to take him back; which the other replied he should do very willingly. Fineo had learned the cause of his sentence, as fame had noised it everywhere. Taking his friends with him, therefore, and their retinue, he went to Currado, and said, "Sir, the person whom you have condemned is no slave, he is a freeman, and my son: he is ready also to marry the woman: then please to defer the execution, till it be known whether she be willing to have him, that

nothing be done contrary to law." Currado was greatly surprised, hearing that he was Fineo's son, and being ashamed of their mistake, confessed that what he required was reasonable, and sent for Amerigo, and acquainted him with these things.

Nothing could exceed Amerigo's miserable anxiety, lest his daughter and her child should have been put to death before that time, knowing that if she was alive, everything might be fairly accommodated; therefore he sent in all haste to her, to prevent his orders being obeyed, if they were not already performed. The messenger found the servant who had carried the sword and poison, standing before her, and as she was in no haste to make her choice, he was abusing her, and would have forced her to have taken one. But hearing his master's command, he returned, and told him how it was: at which he was thoroughly satisfied, and went to Fineo to beg his pardon for what had been done, declaring that if Teodoro married his daughter he should be perfectly contented. Fineo accepted his apology, and assured him, that he should either marry her, or else the law should take its course. This being agreed, they went to Teodoro (who, though rejoiced to find his father, was yet under apprehensions of dying), and asked him if he consented. Teodoro, hearing that he had it at his option to marry his Violante, was as much rejoiced as if he had gone directly from hell to heaven, and replied that he should esteem it as the greatest favour in the world. Then he sent to know the young lady's mind, and she hearing of what happened to Teodoro, began to receive a little comfort after all her affliction. Nothing in the world could be more pleasing to her, she said, than to be the wife of Teodoro; but yet she should always wait her father's commands. Everything being thus settled, the wedding was celebrated to the great joy of the whole city. In a little time the bride began to recover her looks, and having taken care of the infant, she went to pay her respects to Fineo, who, being returned from this embassy, received her as his daughter, with the utmost joy and respect. Soon after they embarked all together for Laiazzo, where the two lovers lived peaceably and happily together all their lives.

[Indifferent in itself, this tale is chiefly curious as being the foundation of the plot of Beaumont and Fletcher's 'Triumph of Love,' the second and best of their 'Four Plays in One.']

NOVEL VIII.

Anastasio, being in love with a young lady, spent a good part of his fortune, without being able to gain her affections. At the request of his relations he retires to Chiassi, where he sees a lady pursued and slain by a gentleman, and then given to the dogs to be devoured. He invites his friends, along with his mistress, to come and dine with him, when they see the same thing, and she, fearing the like punishment, takes him for her husband.

When Lauretta had made an end, Filomena began thus, by the queen's command:—Most gracious ladies, as pity is a commendable quality in us, in like manner do we find cruelty severely punished by Divine Justice; which, that I may make plain to you all, and afford means to drive it from your hearts, I mean to relate a novel as full of compassion as it is agreeable.

In Ravenna, an ancient city of Romagna, dwelt formerly many persons of quality; amongst the rest was a young gentleman named Anastasio de gli Onesti, who, by the deaths of his father and uncle, was left immensely rich; and being a bachelor, fell in love with one of the daughters of Signor Paolo Traversaro (of a family much superior to his own), and was in hopes, by his assiduous courtship, to gain her affection. But though his endeavours were generous, noble, and praiseworthy, so far were they from succeeding, that, on the contrary, they rather turned out to his disadvantage; and so cruel, and even savage was the beloved fair one (either her singular beauty or noble descent having made her thus haughty and scornful), that neither he, nor anything that he did, could ever please her. This so afflicted Anastasio, that he was going to lay violent hands upon himself; but, thinking better of it, he frequently had a mind to leave her entirely; or else to hate her, if he could, as much as she had hated him. But this proved a vain design; for he constantly found that the less his hope, the greater always was his love.

The young man persevered then in his love and his extravagant way of life, till his friends all agreed that he was destroying his constitution, as well as wasting his substance; they therefore advised and entreated that he would leave the place, and go and live somewhere else; for, by that means, he might lessen both his love and expense. For some time he made light of this advice, till being very much impor-

tuned, and not knowing how to refuse them, he promised to do so; when, making extraordinary preparations, as if he was going a long journey, either into France or Spain, he mounted his horse, and left Ravenna, attended by many of his friends, and went to a place about three miles off, called Chiassi, where he ordered tents and pavilions to be brought, telling those who had accompanied him, that he meant to stay there, but that they might return to Ravenna. There he lived in the most splendid manner, inviting sometimes this company, and sometimes that, both to dine and sup, as he had used to do before.

Now it happened in the beginning of May, the season being extremely pleasant, that, thinking of his cruel mistress, he ordered all his attendants to retire, and leave him to his own thoughts; and then he walked along, step by step, and lost in reflection, till he came to a forest of pines. It being then the fifth hour of the day, and he advanced more than half a mile into the grove, without thinking either of his dinner, or anything else but his love; on a sudden he seemed to hear a most grievous lamentation, with the loud shrieks of a woman. This put an end to his meditation, when looking around him, to know what the matter was, he saw come out of a thicket full of briars and thorns, and run towards the place where he was, a most beautiful lady, quite naked, with her flesh all scratched and rent by the bushes, crying terribly, and begging for mercy. In close pursuit of her were two fierce mastiffs, biting and tearing wherever they could lay hold, and behind, upon a black steed, rode a gloomy knight, with a dagger in his hand, loading her with the bitterest imprecations. The sight struck him at once with wonder and consternation, as well as pity for the lady, whom he was desirous to rescue from such trouble and danger, if possible; but finding himself without arms, he tore off a branch of a tree, and went forward with it, to oppose both the dogs and the knight. The knight observing this, called out, afar off, "Anastasio, do not concern yourself; but leave the dogs and me to do by this wicked woman as she has deserved." At these words the dogs laid hold of her, and he coming up to them, dismounted from his horse. Anastasio then stepped up to him, and said, "I know not who you are, that are acquainted thus with me: but I must tell you, that it is a most villanous action for a man, armed as you are, to pursue a naked woman, and to set dogs upon

her also, as if she were a wild beast; be assured that I shall defend her to the utmost of my power."

The knight replied, "I was once your countryman, when you were but a child, and was called Guido de gli Anastagi, at which time I was more enamoured with this woman, than ever you were with Traversaro's daughter; but she treated me so cruelly, and with so much insolence, that I killed myself with this dagger which you now see in my hand, for which I am doomed to eternal punishment. Soon afterwards she, who moreover was rejoiced at my death, died likewise, and for her cruelty, as also for the joy which she expressed at my misery, she is condemned as well as myself; our sentences are for her to flee before me, and for me, who loved her so well, to pursue her as a mortal enemy; and when I overtake her, with this dagger, with which I murdered myself, do I murder her; then I rip her open to the spine, and take out that hard and cold heart, which neither love nor pity could pierce, with all her entrails, and throw them to the dogs; and in a little time (so wills the justice and power of Heaven) she rises, as though she had never been dead, and renews her miserable flight, whilst we pursue her over again. Every Friday in the year, about this time, do I sacrifice her here, as you see, and on other days in other places, wherever she has thought or done anything against me: and thus being from a lover become her mortal enemy, I am to follow her for years as many as the months she was cruel to me. Let then divine justice take its course, nor offer to oppose what you are no way able to withstand."

Anastasio drew back at these words, terrified to death, and waited to see what the other was going to do. The knight, having made an end of speaking, ran at her with the utmost fury, as she was seized by the dogs, and pulled down upon her knees begging for mercy. Then with his dagger he pierced through her breast, and tore out her heart and her entrails, which the dogs immediately devoured as if half famished. In a little time she rose again, as if nothing had happened, and fled towards the sea, the dogs biting and tearing her all the way; the knight also being remounted, and taking his dagger, pursued her as before, till they soon got out of sight.

Upon seeing these things, Anastasio stood divided betwixt fear and pity, and at length it came into his mind that, as it happened always on a Friday, it might be of particular use. Returning then to his servants, he sent for some of his friends and relations, and said to them, "You have often im-

portuned me to leave off loving this my enemy, and to contract my expenses; I am ready to do so, provided you grant me one favour, which is this, that next Friday, you engage Paolo Traversaro, his wife and daughter, with all their women, friends and relations to come and dine with me: the reason of my requiring this you will see at that time." This seemed to them but a small matter, and returning to Ravenna they invited those whom he had desired, and though they found it difficult to prevail upon the young lady, yet the others carried her at last along with them. Anastasio had provided a magnificent entertainment under the pines where that spectacle had lately been; and having seated all his company, he contrived that the lady should sit directly opposite to the scene of action. The last course then was no sooner served up, than the lady's shrieks began to be heard. This surprised them all, and they began to inquire what it was, and, as nobody could inform them, they all rose: when immediately they saw the lady, the dogs, and the knight, who were soon amongst them. Great was consequently the clamour, both against the dogs and the knight, and many of them went to the lady's assistance. But the knight made the same harangue to them, that he had done to Anastasio, which terrified and filled them with wonder; then he acted the same part over again, whilst the ladies (there were many of them present who were related to both the knight and lady, and who remembered his love and unhappy death) all lamented as much as if it had happened to themselves.

This tragical affair being ended, and the lady and knight both gone away, they held various discourses together about it; but none seemed so much affected as Anastasio's mistress, who had heard and seen everything distinctly, and was sensible that it concerned her more than any other person, calling to mind her invariable cruelty towards him; so that already she seemed to flee before his wrathful spirit, with the mastiffs at her heels. Such was her terror at this thought, that, turning her hatred into love, she sent that very evening a trusty damsel privately to him, to entreat him in her name to come and see her, for she was ready to fulfil his desires. Anastasio replied, that nothing could be more agreeable to him but that he desired no favour from her but what was consistent with her honour. The lady, who was sensible that it had been always her own fault they were not married, answered, that she was willing; and going herself to her father and mother, she acquainted them with her intention.

This gave them the utmost satisfaction; and the next Sunday the marriage was solemnized with all possible demonstrations of joy. And that spectacle was not attended with this good alone; but all the women of Ravenna were ever after so terrified with it, that they were more ready to listen to, and oblige the men, than ever they had been before.

[We are informed, in a note by the persons employed for the correction of the 'Decameron,' that this tale is taken, with a variation merely in the names, from a chronicle written by Helinandus, a French monk of the 13th century, which comprises a history of the world, from the creation to the author's time. This story, which seems to be the origin of all retributory spectres, was translated, in 1569, into English verse, by Christopher Tye, under the title of 'A Notable Historye of Nastagio and Traversari, no less pitiefull than pleasaunt.' It is not impossible that such old translations, now obsolete and forgotten, may have suggested to Dryden's notice those stories of Boccaccio which he has chosen. 'Sigismunda and Guiscard, as well as 'Cimon and Iphigenia,' had appeared in old English rhyme before they received embellishment from his genius. In his 'Theodore and Honoria,' he has adorned the tale of the spectre huntsman with all the charms of versification. The supernatural agency, as well as the feelings of those present at Nastagio's entertainment, are managed with wonderful skill, and it seems, on the whole, the best executed of the three novels which he had selected from the 'Decameron.'

Every one is familiar with Byron's allusion to this story:

"Sweet hour of twilight!—In the solitude
Of the pine forest, and the silent shore
Which bounds Ravenna's immemorial wood,
Rooted where once the Adrian wave flowed o'er,
To where the last Cæsarean fortress stood;
Ever green forest! which Boccaccio's lore,
And Dryden's lay made haunted ground to me,
How have I loved that twilight hour and thee!

"The shrill cicalas, people of the pine,
Making their summer lives one ceaseless song,
Where the sole echoes, save my steeds and mine,
And vesper bells, that stole the boughs among.
The spectre huntsman of Onesti's line,
His hell-dogs, and their chace, and the fair throng
Which learn'd from this example not to fly
From a true lover, shadowed my mind's eye."]

NOVEL IX.

Federigo being in love, without meeting with any return, spends all his substance, having nothing left but one poor hawk, which he gives to his lady for her dinner when she comes to his house; she, knowing this, changes her resolution, and marries him, by which means he becomes very rich.

THE queen now observing that only she and Dioneo were left to speak, said pleasantly to this effect:—As it is now come to my turn, I shall give you, ladies, a novel something like the preceding one, that you may not only know what influence the power of your charms has over a generous heart, but that you may learn likewise to bestow your favours of your own accord, and where you think most proper, without suffering Fortune to be your directress, who disposes blindly, and without the least judgment whatsoever.

You must understand then, that Coppo di Borghese (who was a person of great respect and authority among us, and whose amiable qualities, joined to his noble birth, had rendered him worthy of immortal fame) in the decline of life, used to divert himself among his neighbours and acquaintances, by relating things that had happened in his day, and this he knew how to do with more exactness and elegance of expression than any other person: he, I say, amongst other pleasant stories, used to tell us, that at Florence dwelt a young gentleman named Federigo, son of Filippo Alberighi, who, in feats of arms and gentility, surpassed all the youth in Tuscany. This gentleman was in love with a lady called Monna Giovanna, one of the most agreeable women in Florence, and to gain her affection, he was continually making tilts, balls, and such diversions; lavishing away his money in rich presents, and everything that was extravagant. But she, as pure in conduct as she was fair, made no account either of what he did for her sake, or of himself.

As Federigo continued to live in this manner, spending profusely, and acquiring nothing, his wealth soon began to waste, till at last he had nothing left but a very small farm, the income of which was a most slender maintenance, and a single hawk, one of the best in the world. Yet loving still more than ever, and finding he could subsist no longer in the city, in the manner he would choose to live, he retired to his farm, where he went out fowling, as often as the weather

"I SHOULD RECOVER IF I HAD FEDERIGO'S HAWK"

FIFTH DAY ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ NOVEL IX

SIR FEDERIGO'S HAWK

would permit, and bore his distress patiently, without ever making his necessity known to anybody. Now it happened, after he was thus brought low, the lady's husband fell sick, and, being very rich, he made a will, by which he left all his substance to an only son, who was almost grown up, and if he should die without issue, he then ordered that it should revert to his lady, whom he was extremely fond of; and when he had disposed thus of his fortune, he died. Monna Giovanna now, being left a widow, retired, as our ladies usually do during the summer season, to a house of hers in the country, near to that of Federigo: whence it happened that her son soon became acquainted with him, and they used to divert themselves together with dogs and hawks; and the boy, having often seen Federigo's hawk fly, and being strangely taken with it, was desirous of having it, though the other valued it to that degree, that he knew not how to ask for it.

This being so, the boy soon fell sick, which gave his mother great concern, as he was her only child, and she ceased not to attend on and comfort him; often requesting, if there was any particular thing which he fancied, to let her know it, and promising to procure it for him if it was possible. The young gentleman, after many offers of this kind, at last said, "Madam, if you could contrive for me to have Federigo's hawk, I should soon be well." She was in some perplexity at this, and began to consider how best to act. She knew that Federigo had long entertained a liking for her, without the least encouragement on her part; therefore she said to herself, "How can I send or go to ask for this hawk, which I hear is the very best of the kind, and which is all he has in the world to maintain him? Or how can I offer to take away from a gentleman all the pleasure that he has in life?" Being in this perplexity, though she was very sure of having it for a word, she stood without making any reply; till at last the love of her son so far prevailed, that she resolved at all events to make him easy, and not send, but go herself. She then replied, "Set your heart at rest, my boy, and think only of your recovery; for I promise you that I will go to-morrow for it the first thing I do." This afforded him such joy, that he immediately shewed signs of amendment.

The next morning she went, by way of a walk, with another lady in company, to Federigo's little cottage to inquire for him. At that time, as it was too early to go out upon his

diversion, he was at work in his garden. Hearing, therefore, that his mistress inquired for him at the door, he ran thither, surprised and full of joy; whilst she, with a great deal of complaisance, went to meet him; and, after the usual compliments, she said, "Good morning to you, sir; I am come to make you some amends for the losses you have sustained on my account; what I mean is, that I have brought a companion to take a neighbourly dinner with you to-day." He replied, with a great deal of humility, "Madam, I do not remember ever to have suffered any loss by your means, but rather so much good, that if I was worth anything at any time it was due to your singular merit, and the love I had for you: and most assuredly this courteous visit is more welcome to me than if I had all that I have wasted returned to me to spend over again; but you are come to a very poor host." With these words he shewed her into his house, seeming much out of countenance, and thence they went into the garden, when, having no company for her, he said, "Madam, as I have nobody else, please to admit this honest woman, a labourer's wife, to be with you, whilst I set forth the table."

Although his poverty was extreme, never till now had he been so sensible of his past extravagance; but finding nothing to entertain the lady with, for whose sake he had treated thousands, he was in the utmost perplexity, cursing his evil fortune, and running up and down like one out of his wits. At length, having neither money nor anything he could pawn, and longing to give her something, at the same time that he would not make his case known, even so much as to his own labourer, he espied his hawk upon the perch, seized it, and finding it very fat, judged it might make a dish not unworthy of such a lady. Without farther thought, then, he wrung its head off, and gave it to a girl to dress and roast carefully, whilst he laid the cloth, having a small quantity of linen yet left; and then he returned, with a smile on his countenance, into the garden to tell Monna Giovanna that what little dinner he was able to provide was now ready. She and her friend, therefore, entered and sat down with him, he serving them all the time with great respect, when they ate the good hawk, not knowing what it was.

After dinner was over, and they had sat chatting a little while together, the lady thought it a fit time to tell her errand, and addressed him courteously in this manner:—"Sir, if you call to mind your past life, and my resolution,

which perhaps you may call cruelty, I doubt not but you will wonder at my presumption, when you know what I am come for: but if you had children of your own, to know how strong our natural affection is towards them, I am very sure you would excuse me. Now, my having a son forces me, against my own inclination, and all reason whatsoever, to request a thing of you, which I know you value extremely, as you have no other comfort or diversion left you in your small circumstances; I mean your hawk, which he has taken such a fancy to, that unless I bring it back with me, I very much fear that he will die of his disorder. Therefore I entreat you, not for any regard you have for me (for in that respect you are in no way obliged to me), but for that generosity with which you have always distinguished yourself, that you would please to let me have it, so that I may be able to say that my child's life has been restored to me through your gift, and that he and I are under perpetual obligations to you."

Federigo, hearing the lady's request, and knowing it was out of his power to fulfil it, began to weep before he was able to make a word of reply. This she at first attributed to his reluctance to part with his favourite bird, and expected that he was going to give her a flat denial; but after she had waited a little for his answer, he said, "Madam, ever since I have fixed my affections upon you, fortune has still been contrary to me in many things, and sorely I have felt them; but all the rest is nothing to what has now come to pass. You are here to visit me in this my poor dwelling, to which in my prosperity you would never deign to come; you also entreat a small present from me, which it is wholly out of my power to give, as I am going briefly to tell you. As soon as I was acquainted with the great favour you designed me, I thought it proper, considering your superior merit and excellency, to treat you, according to my ability, with something choicer than is usually given to other persons, when, calling to mind my hawk, which you now request, and his goodness, I judged him a fit repast for you, and you have had him roasted. Nor could I have thought him better bestowed, had you not now desired him in a different manner, which is such a grief to me, that I shall never be at peace as long as I live:" and saying this, he produced the hawk's feathers, feet, and talons. The lady began now to blame him for killing such a bird to entertain any woman with, in her heart all the while extolling the greatness of his soul which poverty had no power to abase.

Having now no further hopes of obtaining the hawk, she took leave of Federigo, and returned sadly to her son; who, either out of grief for the disappointment, or through the violence of his disorder, died in a few days. She continued sorrowful for some time; but being left rich, and young, her brothers were very pressing with her to marry again. This went against her inclination, but finding them still importunate, and remembering Federigo's great worth, and the late instance of his generosity, in killing such a bird for her entertainment, she said, "I should rather choose to continue as I am; but since it is your desire that I take a husband, I will have none but Federigo de gli Alberighi." They smiled contemptuously at this, and said, "You simple woman! what are you talking of? He is not worth one farthing in the world." She replied, "I believe it, brothers, to be as you say; but know, *that I would sooner have a man that stands in need of riches, than riches without a man.*" They hearing her resolution, and well knowing his generous temper, gave her to him with all her wealth; and he, seeing himself possessed of a lady whom he had so dearly loved, and of such a vast fortune, lived in all true happiness with her, and was a better manager of his affairs than he had been before.

[This is the 'Faucon,' of La Fontaine. Of this story it has been remarked, that "as a picture of the habitual workings of some one powerful feeling, where the heart reposes almost entirely on itself, without the violent excitement of opposing duties or untoward circumstances, nothing ever came up to the story of Frederico and his Falcon. The perseverance in attachment, the spirit of gallantry and generosity displayed in it, has no parallel in the history of heroical sacrifices. The feeling is so unconscious too, and involuntary, is brought out in such small, unlooked-for, and unostentatious circumstances, as to show it to have been woven into the very nature and soul of the author."]

NOVEL X.

Pietro di Vinciolo goes to sup at a friend's house; his wife, in the meantime, has her gallant: Pietro returns, when she hides him under a chicken coop. Pietro relates, that a young fellow was found in Ercolano's house, where he supped, who had been concealed by his wife. Pietro's wife blames very much the wife of Ercolano: meanwhile an ass happening to tread on the young man's fingers who lay hidden, he cries out. Pietro runs to see what is the matter, and finds out the trick. At length they make it up.

THE queen had now made an end, and every one was pleased with Federigo's good fortune, when Dioneo thus be-

gan:—I know not whether I should term it a vice, accidental, and owing to the depravity of our manners; or whether it be not rather a national infirmity, to laugh sooner at bad things than those which are good, especially when they no way concern ourselves. Therefore, as the pains which I have before taken, and am also now to undergo, aim at no other end but to drive away melancholy, and to afford matter for mirth and laughter, although, charming ladies, some part of the following novel be not altogether so modest, yet, as it may make you merry, I shall venture to relate it. You may do in this case, as when you walk in a garden, that is, pick the roses, and leave the briars behind you. Just so you may leave the vile fellow to his own evil reflections, and laugh at the amorous wiles of his wife, having that regard for other people's misfortunes which they deserve.

There dwelt not long since in Perugia, a very rich man, named Pietro di Vinciolo, who took to him a wife, more, perhaps, to deceive people, and diminish the bad opinion of him universally entertained in Perugia, than for anything else. Fortune was so far conformable to his inclinations, that the wife he found was a young, buxom, red-haired woman, who required two husbands rather than one. Consequently, they had continual jars and animosities together, whilst she would often argue with herself in this way: "This wretch abandons me to follow his infamous propensities. I made choice of him for a husband, and brought him a good fortune, knowing he was a man, and supposing he was fond of what men ought to be fond of. If I had thought he was not a man I would never have had him. He knew I was a woman; why did he take me for his wife if he disliked women? This is not to be borne. Had I been disposed to renounce the world, I would have shut myself up in a nunnery at once. I shall have old age overtake me before I know one good day, and then it will be too late to expect it." Full of such reflections as these, and resolved to indemnify herself for her husband's neglect, she went at last and made her case known to a sanctified old crone, who was perpetually saying over her Pater Nosters, and would talk of nothing else but the lives of the holy fathers, and the wounds of St. Francis.

"My daughter," said the old woman, when the lady had made known her grievances, and her intention of providing a remedy for them, "the Lord knows you will do quite right; and if it was for nothing else, you and every young woman

ought to do the same in order not to lose the good time of youth; for there is no sorer grief to any one of right understanding, than to have wasted precious time. When we are grown old what the devil are we good for, but to sit in the chimney corner, and keep the fire warm? If there's ne'er another can bear true testimony to this, at least I can; for never can I think, without bitter anguish of spirit, on the time I let slip without profit. I did not lose it all, mind; I would not have you suppose I was such a ninny; but I did not get all the good out of it I might. When I call this to mind, and that I am now come to be what you see me, with never a chance of any one giving me a spark of fire to light my tinder, God knows what a heart's grief it is to me. It is not so with men; they are born good for a great many things besides this we are talking of, and the greater part of them are more esteemed in their old age than when they are young. But women are good for nothing but to bear children, or to be made use of to get them, and it is for that they are courted. If you want anything to make this clear to you, you have only to consider that women are always ready, but the men are not; besides, one woman can give enough to do to many men, but several men could not cloy one woman. Since then we are born for this, I say again that you will do quite right to give your husband tit-for-tat, so that when you grow old your soul may have no cause to upbraid your body. In this world everybody gets what he helps himself to, and no more, and this is especially the case with women, who have much more reason than men to make good use of their time while they may; for when we grow old neither our husbands, nor any one else, will look upon us, but they send us into the kitchen to talk to the cat, and count the pots and pans. Nay, what is worse they make rhymes upon us, and jibe us, saying, 'Tit bits for the young, refuse for the old.' The long and the short of the matter, my dear, is this: you could not have made choice of a fitter person than myself to open your mind to, or one that knows better how to help you. There is not the proudest man that wears a head, but I dare tell my mind to, nor the stubbornest, and most uncivil, but I can make fain to follow my leading. Let me only know who it is that best pleases you, and leave the rest to me. But there is one thing, my dear, I would beg you to bear in mind, that is,

that I am a poor body, and I would have you partake the benefit of all my pardons and Pater Nosters."

It was then agreed that if the old woman should meet a certain gentleman in the street, whom the lady described to her, she should know what to do; and, upon this, the lady gave her a piece of salt meat, and sent her away. In a short time the old woman secretly brought her the person she desired, and others afterwards from time to time, according to the lady's fancy, which was a very lively one, and which she gratified as diligently as the fear in which she stood of her husband would allow her. One evening it happened that Pietro being engaged to sup with a friend of his, called Ercolano, the lady made the old woman bring her one of the handsomest and most engaging striplings in all Perugia; but she and her gallant were no sooner seated at table, than Pietro was heard knocking at the door. She was frightened out of her wits, and wishing to hide the youth somewhere or other, and not knowing where to put him better, she covered him with a hen-coop, which stood in a porch adjoining the supper-room, and throwing an empty sack over it, ran to open the door, saying, "Why husband, you have soon made an end of your supper."—"I have not tasted one morsel."—"How comes that?"—"I will tell you," said Pietro, "how it was."

"Ercolano, his wife, and myself, were all sat down, when he heard somebody sneeze; this we did not regard for once or twice, but when it happened three, four, or five times, it naturally surprised us: and Ercolano (who was vexed that his wife had made him wait some time at the door before she let him in) said, in a passion, 'What is the meaning of this? Who is it that sneezes in this manner?' And getting up from the table, he went towards the stairs, under which was a cupboard, made to set things out of the way, and supposing the sound come thence, he opened the door, when there immediately issued out the greatest stench of sulphur that could be, though we had perceived something of it before. Ercolano and his wife had some words about it; when she told him that she had been whitening her veils with brimstone, and had set the pan, over which she had laid them to receive the steam, in that place, and she supposed it continued yet to smoke. After he had opened the door, and the smoke was a little dispersed, he espied the sneezer, who was still hard at it under the pungent influence of the sulphur; but though he continued sneezing, yet he was so near suffocation, that in a very little time more, he would neither have done

that, nor anything else. Ercolano, seeing the person at last, cried out, 'So, madam! I now see why you made us wait so long at the door, but let me die if I do not pay you as you deserve.' The wife, finding that she was discovered, rose from the table without making any excuse, and went I know not whither. Ercolano, not perceiving that his wife was fled, called upon the man that sneezed, and ordered him to come out; but, notwithstanding all he could say, the other never offered to stir, nor indeed was he able. Ercolano at last drew him out by the foot, and was running for a knife to kill him, but I, fearing to be drawn into some difficulty myself about it, would not suffer him to put the fellow to death; but defended him, and called out to the neighbours, who came and carried him away. This spoiled our supper, and I have not had one bit, as I told you."

The lady hearing this account, saw that other women were of the same disposition with herself, although some proved more unlucky than others. She would gladly have vindicated Ercolano's wife, but that she thought by blaming the faults of other people, to make the way more open for her own; so she began:—"Here is a fine affair, truly! this is your virtuous and good woman, who seemed so spiritually-minded always, that I could have confessed myself to her upon occasion. What is worse, she is old: a fine example she sets to young people! Cursed be the hour of her birth, and herself also; vile woman as she is! to be a disgrace to her whole sex; to be so mindless of her own honour, and her plighted faith to her husband, as not to be ashamed to injure so deserving a person, and one who had been always so tender of her! As I hope for mercy, I would have none on such prostitutes, they should every soul of them be burnt alive." Now calling to mind her own spark who was concealed, she began to fondle her husband, and would have had him go to bed, but he, who had more stomach to eat than sleep, asked whether she had anything for supper. "Yes, truly," quoth she, "we are used to have suppers when you are from home. I should fare better were I Ercolano's wife, my dear; now do go to bed."

That evening it happened that some of Vinciolo's labourers had come with some things out of the country, and had put their asses, without giving them any water, into a stable near the porch. One of the asses slipped his halter, being very thirsty, and went smelling everywhere for drink, till he came to the coop under which the young man was hidden.

Now he was forced to lie flat on his belly, and one of his fingers, by strange ill fortune, was uncovered, so that the ass trod upon it, which made him cry out most terribly. Pietro wondered to hear such clamour in the house, and finding it continued, the ass still squeezing the finger close, he called aloud, "Who is there?" Then running to the coop, and turning it up, he saw the young man, who, besides the great pain he had suffered, was frightened to death lest Pietro should do him some mischief. Pietro asked him what business he had there; to which he made no reply, but begged he would do him no harm. "Get up," said Pietro, "I shall not hurt you, only tell me how you came hither, and upon what account!" The young man confessed everything; whilst Pietro, full as glad that he had found him, as his wife was sorry, brought him into the room where she sat, in all the terror imaginable, expecting him. Seating himself now before her, he said, "Here, you that were so outrageous at Ercolano's wife, saying that she should be burnt, and that she was a scandal to you all; what do you say now of yourself? Or how could you have the assurance to utter such things with regard to her, when you knew yourself to be equally guilty? You are all alike, and think to cover your own transgressions by other people's mistakes: I wish a fire would come from heaven, and consume you altogether, for a perverse generation as you are." The lady, now seeing that he went no further than a few words, put a good face on the matter, and replied, "Yes, I make no doubt but you would have us all destroyed; for you are as fond of us as a dog of a stick. You do well to compare me to Ercolano's wife, who is an ugly, hypocritical old woman, and he one of the best of husbands, that gives her what she likes; whereas, you know it is the reverse with regard to us two; I would sooner go in rags, were you what you ought to be, than to have everything in plenty, and you continue the same person you have always been." Pietro found she had matter enough to serve her the whole night, and having no mind to hear more, said "Enough for the present, madam; I will take care that you shall have more comfort for the time to come; only do me the great favour to see and get us something for supper, for I suppose this young spark is fasting as well as myself."—"'Tis very true," she replied, "for we were going to sit down when you unluckily came to the door."—"Then go and get something," he said, "and after supper I will settle this matter in such a way as will leave you no cause for complaint." She, finding

her husband was satisfied, went instantly about it, and they all three supped cheerfully together. What followed I cannot pretend to tell you, but it was said next day in Perugia that the husband was revenged in his own way, and the wife not displeased.

[The greater part of this tale is taken from the ninth book of the Golden Ass,' of Apuleius. It also bears a strong resemblance to the thirty-first and thirty-third novels of Girolamo Morlini.]

If Dioneo's novel was not much laughed at by the ladies, it was not for want of mirth, but from modesty. The queen, seeing that there was an end of the novels of her day, arose, and taking the crown from her own head, placed it upon Eliza's, saying, "Madam, now it is your business to command:" Eliza, taking upon herself the honour, gave the same orders to the master of the household, as had been done in the former reigns, with regard to what was necessary during her administration; she then said, "We have often heard that many people by their ready wit and smart repartees, have not only blunted the keen satire of other persons, but have also warded off some imminent danger. Then, as the subject is agreeable enough, and may be useful, I will that to-morrow's discourse be to that effect: namely, of such persons as have retorted some stroke of wit which was pointed at them; or else, by some quick reply, or prudent foresight, have avoided either danger, or derision." This was agreeable to the whole assembly, and the queen now gave them leave to depart till the hour of supper; at that time they were called together and sat cheerfully down as usual. When supper was over, Emilia was ordered to begin a dance, and Dioneo to sing. But he, attempting to sing what the queen disapproved, she said, with some warmth, "Dioneo, I will have none of this ribaldry; either sing us a song fit to be heard, or you shall see that I know how to resent it." At these words he put on a more serious countenance, and began the following

SONG.

Cupid, the charms that crown my fair,
Have made me slave to you and her.
The lightning of her eyes,
That darting through my bosom flies,
Doth still your sov'reign power declare,
At your control
Each grace binds fast my vanquish'd soul.

Devoted to your throne
From henceforth I myself confess,
Nor can I guess
If my desires to her be known ;
Who claims each wish, each thought so far,
That all my peace depends on her.

Then haste, kind godhead, and inspire
A portion of your sacred fire ;
To make her feel
That self-consuming zeal,
The cause of my decay,
That wastes my very heart away.

When Dioneo had made an end, the queen called for several other songs, but his, nevertheless, was highly commended; afterwards, great part of the evening being spent, and the heat of the day sufficiently damped by the breezes of the night, she ordered them all to go and repose themselves till the following day

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THE SIXTH DAY.

THE moon had now lost her brightness in the midst of the heavens, and the world became illumined by the appearance of the new day, when the queen arose with all her company, and they walked forth upon the dewy grass, to some distance from that little eminence, holding various arguments by the way concerning their late novels, and making themselves merry with reciting some of the most entertaining over again: till at last, the heat growing excessive, as the sun was mounted to a greater height, they turned back, and came to the palace, where, the tables being set forth against their return, and every part of the house bedecked with sweet smelling flowers, they sat down to dinner. When that was over, and after they had sung a few songs, some went to sleep, and others played at chess; whilst Dioneo and Lauretta sang the song of Troilus and Cressida. At the usual hour they met, by the fountain's side, and the queen was about to call for the first novel, when she was interrupted by an occurrence such as never had happened before, namely, a great noise and tumult among the servants in the kitchen. The queen sent for the master of the household to know what it was all about, but he could not tell;

all he knew was that there was a dispute between Licisca and Tindaro. The queen then ordered the pair to be brought before her, and when they were come into her presence she demanded the reason of their discord. Tindaro began to make answer,—when Licisca, whose blood was up, turning upon him in high disdain, exclaimed, "How dare this beast of a man presume to open his mouth before me! Let me speak." Then turning to the queen she proceeded:

"This fellow, my lady, would tell me, forsooth, all about Sicofante's wife, for all the world as if I did not know her of old; and he would have me believe that there was violence and bloodshed the first night Sicofante went to bed to her; but I say there was no such thing, but all passed very smoothly and comfortably. This jackass actually believes that young girls are such fools as to lose their time, waiting, shilly shally, three or four years, till their fathers or brothers think fit to get them a husband. Ecod, a fine time they'd have of it waiting so long! By the faith of a Christian! and I ought to know what I am saying when I swear that oath, among all my gossips there is not one that went a maid to her husband: aye and the married women too, I know what tricks they play on their husbands: and yet this great mutton-headed oaf would have me learn from him what are the ways of women, as if I was born yesterday."

Whilst Licisca talked thus, the ladies laughed at such a rate you might have drawn all their teeth. The queen commanded her six times at least to hold her tongue, but it was of no avail. As soon as she had let out all she chose to say, the queen turned to Dioneo, and said with a smile, "This question belongs to your province; therefore, when our novels are ended, you shall give your verdict upon it." "Madam," he replied at once, "the verdict is given without hearing more; I say that Licisca is right, and I agree with her in opinion that Tindaro is an ass."

When Licisca heard this she burst out laughing, and turning to Tindaro: "I told thee so," she said; "God help thee, with thy eyes hardly open yet, to think thou knowest more than I do. Gramercy! I have not lived for nothing, not I." And if the queen had not peremptorily cut her short, and ordered her and Tindaro to begone, nobody else would have had a chance of speaking that day. When the disputants were gone, the queen called on Filomena to begin the day's novels, which she did as follows:

NOVEL I.

A certain knight offers a lady to carry her behind him, and to tell her a pleasant story by the way; but, doing it with an ill grace, she chose rather to walk on foot.

Ladies, as stars are the ornaments of heaven, flowers of the spring, and as the hills are most beautiful when planted with trees, so a smart and elegant turn of expression is the embellishment of discourse; and the shorter the better, especially in women. But true it is, whether it be owing to our unhappy dispositions, or some particular enmity which the stars bear to our sex, there is hardly any among us that knows how to say a good thing pat to the occasion, or to understand it when said, which is a great disgrace to us all. But as Pampinea has before enlarged on this point, I shall say nothing farther, but only show, by the neat manner in which a lady silenced a knight, the great beauty of a word or two spoken in due time and place.

You may all of you have heard, that there lived in our city, not a great while ago, a lady of much worth and wit, whose good qualities deserve not that her name should be concealed; she was called Madame Oretta, and was the wife of Signor Geri Spina. Once when she was in the country, and was taking a long walk with some ladies and knights, who had dined at her house the day before, the way seemed a little tedious, and one of the knights, who happened to be on horseback, said, that if she pleased, he would take her up behind him, and entertain her with one of the best stories in the world. The lady willingly accepted the offer. The knight, who told a story with as ill a grace as he wore a sword, began his tale, which was really a good one; but, by frequent repetitions, and beginning it over again to say it better; by mistaking one name for another, and relating everything in the worst manner, he mangled it to that degree, that he made the lady quite sick. Unable to bear it any longer, seeing him set fast and not likely soon to extricate himself, she said pleasantly to him, "Sir, your horse has a very uneasy trot, pray set me down." The knight, who took a hint more readily than he told a story, made a laugh of it, and began another tale, leaving unfinished the one he had begun so badly.

NOVEL II.

Cisti, the baker, by a smart reply, makes Signor Geri Spina sensible of an unreasonable request.

THE whole company was pleased with what Oretta had said, when the queen pointed next to Pampinea, who spoke thus:—It is beyond my capacity to determine whether nature be more in fault, when she joins a generous soul to a homely person; or fortune in dooming a body, graced with a noble spirit, to a mean condition of life; as was the case of a citizen of ours, named Cisti, as well as of many others. For this man, though he had a truly great spirit, yet fortune made him no better than a baker. For my part, I should quarrel with both nature and fortune, did I not know nature to be absolutely wise, and that fortune has a thousand eyes, although fools have described her as blind. I suppose, therefore, that both, being truly wise and judicious, act as we ourselves often do, who, uncertain of what may happen, for our convenience often bury our most valuable treasure in the meanest places of our houses, as the least liable to suspicion; whence we can fetch them in time of need, and where they have continued more secure than they would have been in the best chamber of the house. So these two ministers of the world do many times hide their most precious blessings under the cover of some mean employ, to the end that, drawing them thence when need requires, they may appear with greater lustre; which was plainly shown, although in a small matter, by our baker Cisti, to the apprehension of Signor Geri Spina, whom the story of Madame Oretta, who was his wife, brings fresh into my mind; as I shall relate in a very short novel.

You must know, then, that Pope Boniface, with whom this same Signor Geri was in great esteem, having occasion to send ambassadors to Florence, about some particular business, they were entertained at this Geri Spina's house, and employed with him in the said pope's negotiation. It happened, whatever was the reason, that they passed on foot every morning by the church of St. Maria Ughi, where Cisti the baker dwelt, and followed his trade. Though fortune had given Cisti but a mean employ, yet in this respect she had been kind to him—that he had grown very rich in it; and, without having any desire to leave it for a better, he lived very gen-

erously among his neighbours, having everything in plenty, the best wine especially, both red and white, that the country could afford. Now, seeing the ambassadors walk daily by his door, Cesti supposed, as the season was sultry, that it would be esteemed a kindness to let them drink some of his fine white wine; but regarding at the same time the disparity between his station and theirs, he would not presume to invite them, but thought of a way whereby Signor Geri might be induced of his own accord to taste it. Having a white frock on, therefore, with an apron before him, which bespoke him rather a miller than a baker, every morning about the time that he supposed they should come that way, would he order a bucket full of fair water to be brought, and a decanter of wine, with a couple of beakers as bright as crystal, to be set before him; then, seating himself at his door, and first clearing his mouth and throat, he would take a draught or two just as they were going past, with a gusto sufficient to cause an appetite almost in a man that was dead.

Signor Geri observing this once or twice, said, the third time, "What say you? Is your wine good, Master Cisti?" "That it is, signor," he replied, starting up; "but how can I convince you unless you taste?" Signor Geri, whom either the heat of the weather, or his extraordinary fatigue, or perhaps the relish with which he saw the other drink, had rendered thirsty, turned with a smile to the ambassadors, and said, "Gentlemen, we may as well drink of this honest man's wine, perhaps it is such that we shall not need to repent." Accordingly they went together to Cisti, who, ordering seats to be brought out of his bakehouse, prayed them to sit down, saying to their servants, who offered to wash their glasses, "Friends, get you gone; leave this to me. I am no worse a skinker than a baker, and stay you ever so long you shall not taste a drop." Washing then four neat glasses, and ordering a fresh decanter to be brought, he filled round to Signor Geri and the ambassadors, who all thought it the best wine they had tasted in a long time; and having highly commended it, they called to drink with him most mornings during their stay. At length, having despatched their business, and being about to depart, Signor Geri made an entertainment for them, to which he invited a great part of the most eminent citizens, and Cisti amongst the rest, who could by no means be persuaded to go. Signor Geri then ordered one of his servants to fetch a flask of Cisti's wine, and to fill half a glass round to all the company at the first table. The servant

(offended, as we may suppose, that he had never been able to get a taste of it) took a very large bottle, which as soon as Cisti saw, he said, "Friend, Signor Geri never sent thee to me." The servant affirmed over and over that he had, but meeting with no other reply, he returned to his master, and told him. Then said Signor Geri, "Go back, and tell him that I did send thee, and if he makes the like answer again, ask him whither he thinks I should send thee." The servant went again, and said, "Most assuredly, Signor Geri, my master, has sent me to you."—"I tell thee, friend, it is impossible."—"Then," quoth the servant, "whither do you think he sent me?"—"To the river Arno." When the fellow reported this answer to Signor Geri, his eyes were immediatey opened, and he said, "Let me see what bottle it was which you carried to him." On seeing it, he added, "Now, trust me, Cisti spoke truth." Then reprimanding him severely, he ordered him to take a more suitable vessel, which as soon as Cisti saw, he said, "Why now I am certain that he sent thee to me;" and he filled it very readily for him. That day also he had a cask filled with the same wine, which he sent to Signor Geri's house, and going himself after it, he thus addressed him:—"Sir, I would not have you think that I was any way startled at the sight of the great bottle this morning; but as I imagined you had forgotten what I had endeavoured to intimate to you for several days past with my little decanters; namely, that mine is no wine for servants; so I only did it to remind you again of the same. But, meaning to be steward no longer, I have now brought my whole store; dispose of it as you please." Signor Geri was extremely thankful for his valuable present, and ever afterwards esteemed him as his most intimate friend.

NOVEL III.

Madam Nonna de' Pulci silences the Bishop of Florence, by a smart reply to an unseemly piece of raillery.

Cisti's answer and his generosity having been highly commended, the queen gave her orders to Lauretta, who began as follows:—Most gracious ladies, Pampinea, the other day, and Filomena now, have both justly touched upon our own little merit, as well as the beauty of repartees: therefore, as it is needless to say anything farther upon that head, I shall

only remind you, that your words should be such as only to nip or touch the hearer, as the sheep nibbles the grass, and not as the dog bites; for in that case it is no longer wit, but foul scurrility. This was excellently well set forth, both in what was said by Oretta, and in the reply of Cisti. It is true, however, that if a sharp thing be spoken by way of answer, and bites a little too keenly, yet if the person who answers in that manner was stung first, he is the less to blame. Therefore, you should be cautious both how, when, and with whom you jest. For want of attending sufficiently to this, a certain prelate of ours met with a sharper bite than he had given, as I shall show you in a very short novel. When Signor Antonio d'Orso, a most wise and worthy person, was bishop of Florence, a certain gentleman of Catalonia, marshal to King Robert, happened to come thither; who, having a good person, and being a great admirer of the fair sex, took a particular liking to a lady of that city, who was niece to the bishop's brother; and understanding that her husband, though of a good family, was most abominably sordid and covetous, he agreed to give him five hundred florins of gold to let him pass one night with her. Accordingly he got so many pieces of silver gilt, which he gave to him, and then obtained his desire contrary to her will and knowledge. This being discovered soon afterwards, the wretch became the common jest and scorn of mankind; but the bishop, like a wise man, affected to know nothing of the matter.

The bishop being often in company with the marshal, it happened on St. John's day, that, as they were riding side by side through the city, viewing the ladies all the way, that the bishop cast his eye upon one, named Monna de' Pulchi, then newly married, and who is since dead of the plague, cousin also to Alesso Rinucci, whom you all knew: this lady, besides her great beauty, was endowed with a generous spirit, and spoke pertinently and well. Showing her, therefore, to the marshal, as soon as they came near her, he laid his hand upon the marshal's shoulder, and said, "Madam, what do you think of this gentleman? Could he make a conquest over you or not?" This seemed to touch her honour, or at least she thought it might give some persons present a worse opinion of her. Without ever thinking, then, how to clear herself of such a charge, but resolving to return like for like, she replied, "Perhaps he might, my lord; but then I should like to be paid *with good money*." This touched them both to the quick; the one as doing a very dishonourable thing to

the bishop's relation; the other as receiving in his own person the shame belonging to his brother. And they rode away, without so much as looking at one another, or exchanging a word together all the day after. Very justly, therefore, did this lady bite the biter.

NOVEL IV.

Chichibio, cook to Currado Gianfiliazzi, by a sudden reply which he makes to his master, turns his wrath into laughter, and so escapes the punishment with which he had threatened him.

Lauretta being silent, Neifile was ordered to follow, which she did in this manner:—Though ready wit and invention furnish people with words proper to their different occasions; yet sometimes does fortune, an assistant to the timorous, tip the tongue with a sudden, and yet a more pertinent reply than the most mature deliberation could ever have suggested, as I shall now briefly relate to you.

Currado Gianfiliazzi, as most of you have both known and seen, was always esteemed a gallant and worthy citizen, delighting much in hounds and hawks, not to mention his other excellences, as no way relating to our present purpose. Having taken a crane one day with his hawk, and finding it to be young and fat, he sent it home to his cook, Chichibio, who was a Venetian, with orders to prepare it for supper. The cook, a poor simple fellow, trussed and spitted it, and when it was nearly roasted, and began to smell pretty well, it chanced that a woman of the neighbourhood, called Brunetta, with whom he was much enamoured, came into the kitchen, and being taken with the high savour, earnestly begged of him to give her a leg. He replied, very merrily, singing all the time, "Madam Brunetta, you shall have no leg from me." Nettled at this, she retorted, "As I hope to live, if you do not give it me, you need never expect any favour more from me." The dispute was carried to a great height between them, and to quiet her, at last, he was forced to give her one of the legs. Accordingly the crane was served up at supper, with only one leg, Currado having a friend along with him. Currado wondered at this, and, sending for the cook, demanded what was become of the other leg. He very foolishly replied, and without the least thought, "Cranes have only one leg, sir."—"What the devil does the

man talk of?" cried Currado, in great wrath. "Only one leg! Rascal, dost think I never saw a crane before?" Chichibio still persisted in his denial. "Believe me, sir, it is as I say, and I will prove it to you whenever you please, upon living cranes."—"Well," said Currado, who did not choose to have any more words then out of regard to his friend, "as thou undertakest to show me a thing which I never saw or heard of before, I am content to make proof thereof tomorrow morning; but by all the saints, if I find it otherwise, I will make thee remember it the longest day thou hast to live."

There was an end to the matter for that night, and the next morning Currado, whose passion would scarcely suffer him to get any rest, rose betimes, ordered his horses, and took Chichibio along with him towards a river, where he used early in the morning to see plenty of cranes. "We shall soon see," said he, "whether you spoke truth, or not, last night." Chichibio, finding his master's wrath not at all abated, and that he was now to make good his random words, rode on first with all the fear imaginable: gladly would he have made his escape, but he saw no possible means: and he was continually looking about him, expecting everything that appeared to be a crane with two legs. But being come near to the river, he chanced to see, before anybody else, a number of cranes, each standing upon one leg, as they are used to do when they are sleeping; whereupon, showing them quickly to his master, he said, "Now, sir, yourself may see that I spoke nothing but truth, when I said that cranes have only one leg: look at those yonder, if you please." Currado, beholding the cranes, replied, "Yes, sirrah! but stay awhile, and I will show thee they have two." Then, riding up to them, he cried out, "Shough! shough!" which made them set down the other foot, and after taking a step or two, they all flew away. Currado then turned to him, and said, "Well, thou lying knave, art thou now convinced that they have two legs?" Chichibio, quite at his wit's end, and scarcely knowing whether he was on his head or his heels, suddenly made answer, "Yes, sir; but you did not shout out 'Shough! shough!' to that crane last night, as you have done to these; if you had, it would have put down the other leg, as these did now." This pleased Currado so much, that, turning all wrath into mirth and laughter, he said, "Chichibio, thou sayest right, I should have done so indeed." By this sudden and comical answer, Chichibio escaped a sound drubbing, and made peace with his master.

NOVEL V.

Forese da Rabatta and Giotto, the painter, coming from Mugello, laugh at the meanness of each other's appearance.

The ladies having been much diverted with Chichibio's reply, Pamfilo, by the queen's order, delivered himself to this effect:—As it often happens that fortune hides, under the meanest trades in life, the greatest virtues, which has been proved by Pampinea, so are the greatest geniuses found frequently lodged by nature in the most deformed and misshapen bodies. This truth was verified in two of our own citizens, as I am now going to relate. For the one, who was called Forese da Rabatta, being a little deformed mortal, with a flat Dutch face, worse than any of the family of the Baronci, was yet esteemed by most men a repository of the civil law. And the other, whose name was Giotto, had such a prodigious fancy, that there was nothing in Nature, the parent of all things, but he could imitate it with his pencil so well, and draw it so like, as to deceive our very senses, making them imagine that to be the very thing itself which was only his painting; therefore, having brought that art again to light, which had lain buried for many ages, under the errors of such as aimed more to captivate the eyes of the ignorant, than to please the understandings of those who were really judges, he may deservedly be called one of the lights and glories of our city, and the rather as being master of his art, notwithstanding his modesty would never suffer himself to be so esteemed: which honour, though rejected by him, displayed itself in him with the greater lustre, as it was so eagerly usurped by others less knowing than himself, and by many also who had all their knowledge from him. But though his excellence in his profession was so wonderful, yet as to his person and aspect he had no way the advantage of Signor Forese. To come then to my story:

These two worthies had each his country seat at Mugello, and Forese being gone thither in the vacation time, and riding upon an unsightly steed, chanced to meet there with Giotto, who was no better equipped than himself, and they returned together to Florence. Travelling slowly along, as they were able to go no faster, they were overtaken by a great shower of rain, and forced to take shelter in a poor man's house, who was well known to them both; and as

there was no appearance of the weather's clearing up, and each was desirous of getting home that night, they borrowed two old russet cloaks, and two rusty hats, and proceeded on their journey. After they had got a good part of their way, thoroughly wet, and covered with dirt and mire, which their two shuffling steeds had thrown upon them, and which by no means improved their looks, it began to clear up at last, and they, who had hitherto said but little to each other, now turned to discourse together. Forese, as he jogged on, listening to Giotto, who was excellent at telling a story, began at last to view him attentively from head to foot, and seeing him in that wretched dirty pickle, without ever thinking of his own plight, he fell a laughing, and said, "Do you suppose, Giotto, if a stranger were to meet with you now, who had never seen you before, that he would imagine you to be the best painter in the world, as you really are?" Giotto readily replied, "Yes, sir, I believe he might think so, if looking at you at the same time, he could ever conclude that you had learned your A, B, C." At this Forese was sensible of his mistake, finding himself well paid in his own coin.

NOVEL VI.

Michael Scalza proves to certain young gentlemen, that the family of the Baronci is the most honourable of any in the world, and wins a supper by it.

THE ladies continued laughing at Giotto's smart reply, when the queen commanded Fiammetta to follow, which she did to this purpose:—The mention of the Baronci by Pamfilo, though perhaps you may not know them so well as himself, puts me in mind of a story in which their great nobility is plainly exhibited, without deviating from our present subject, and therefore I choose to relate it.

There lived not long since in our city a young gentleman, called Michael Scalza, who was one of the most agreeable and pleasant companions in the world; for which reason his company was much courted by all the young people of Florence, whenever they could be favoured with it. Now he was one day with some friends at Mount Ughi, when the question happened to be started, Which was the noblest and most ancient family in Florence? Accordingly, one named

the Uberti, another the Lamberti, some preferring one, and some another, according to their different humours and interests; upon which Scalza smiled, and said, "You are all mistaken; the most noble, as well as the most ancient family, I do not say in Florence only, but in the whole world, is that of the Baronci; in this all philosophers are agreed, and every one that knows them, as well as myself. And, lest you should think that I speak of some other family of that name, I tell you that I mean the Baronci, our neighbours, who live by the great St. Maria." When the young gentlemen, who expected he would have mentioned some other family, heard this one named, they made the greatest fun of it that could be, and said, "You impose anything in the world upon us, as if nobody knew the Baronci but yourself."—"Indeed," quoth he, "I do not, I speak nothing but what is truth, and if there is any one among you who dares lay a wager of a supper for six of his friends, upon that head, I will stand to it; nay, more than that, I will abide by the judgment of any person whom you shall nominate." Hereupon a young spark, called Neri Vannini, said, "I am your man." It was also agreed that one Piero, a Florentine, in whose house they were, should be judge.

The case was stated accordingly to Piero, whilst the whole company bore hard upon Scalza, making themselves very merry with his expected treat. Piero, then, who was a good sensible man, having heard Neri's story, turned to Scalza, and said, "Well, how do you make good your assertion?" Scalza replied, "I prove it by such arguments as not yourself only, but even my antagonist shall confess to be just. You know that the more ancient any family is, the more noble it is deemed; this was agreed among us at the beginning. I have then only to show, in order to win my wager, that the Baronci family is the most ancient of all others. You must understand, then, that they were formed when nature was in her infancy, and before she was perfect at her work, and that the rest of mankind were all created afterwards. To convince you of this, do but examine the figures of one and the other, you will find art and proportion in the last, whereas the first are rough drawn and imperfect; among them you will see one with a long narrow face, another with a prodigious broad one; one that is flat-nosed, another with a nose half an ell long; this has a long hooked chin, that one eye bigger and set lower down than the other. In a word, their faces resemble, for all the world, what children make

when they first learn to draw. Nature, then, you will allow, was in its first and earliest state, when they were created, consequently they are the most ancient of all others, and therefore the most noble." Both Piero, who was to determine, and Neri, who had wagered the treat, and the whole company likewise, on hearing this pleasant argument, agreed that Scalza was in the right, and that the Baronci were the noblest and most ancient people in the whole world. Well, therefore, was it observed by Pamfilo, in describing the ugliness and deformity of Signor Forese, that, if possible, he had a worse person than any of the Baronci.

NOVEL VII.

Madam Filippa, being surprised with her gallant by her husband, is accused and tried for it, but saves herself by her quick reply, and has the laws moderated for the future.

Scalza's argument to prove the nobility of the Baronci having made them all very merry, the queen turned to Filostrato, who began in this manner:—It is a good thing, most worthy ladies, to be able to speak well, and to the purpose; but I hold it best of all to know how to do it when need requires, as was the case with a lady of whom I am going to treat, who escaped an ignominious death by this means, as you shall hear.

In the territory of Prato there was formerly a most severe law, which, without any distinction, condemned all such women to be burnt as were detected by their husbands in adultery. Whilst this law was in force, it chanced that a beautiful young lady, named Filippa, was surprised by her husband with her gallant, a young gentleman of the same city, in her own chamber. Rinaldo de' Pugliesi, for that was the husband's name, was so provoked at this, that he could scarcely refrain from putting them both to death, and forbore it only out of regard to his own life; but yet he resolved that the law should effect what he durst not accomplish with his own hand—the death, namely, of his wife. Having, therefore, sufficient testimony to prove the fact, he had her summoned before the court. The lady, who was of an undaunted spirit, resolved to make her appearance, contrary to the advice of her friends, choosing rather to die by a resolute confession of the truth, than abscond and live basely in exile,

or, by denying the fact, show herself unworthy of the lover with whom she had this intrigue. Being brought, then, before the lord-provost, attended by a great number of friends of both sexes, and encouraged all the way to deny it, she asked him, with a firm voice and steady countenance, what he had to say to her. The provost, seeing her beauty, her noble deportment, and greatness of spirit, began to pity her, fearing lest she should confess something which would force him, for the sake of his honour to condemn her to death. Being constrained, however, to interrogate her upon the charge preferred before him, he said to her, "Madam, here is Rinaldo, your husband, who affirms that he has taken you in adultery, and insists that I pronounce sentence of death upon you, according to the law in that case; but this I cannot do, unless you yourself confess it; therefore take care what answers you make, and tell me if this accusation of his be true." The lady, without showing the least concern, replied, "My lord, it is true, that Rinaldo is my husband, and that he found me in the arms of Lazzarino, where I have been many a time, for the great love I bear him, nor will I ever deny it; but you must know, at the same time, that laws ought to be alike for all, and made with the consent of those persons whom they concern. Now, in this law of yours, it is quite otherwise; for it is binding only on us poor women, who are much better able than men to satisfy many, and moreover none of us ever consented to, or were even consulted about the making of it. I call it, therefore, a most iniquitous law. If you are disposed to take away my life for the breach of it, why of course you may; but, before you pass sentence, I entreat one little favour of you, that is, that you would ask my husband whether, at all times, and as often as he pleased, I have not yielded myself fully to his desires, without ever saying him nay." Rinaldo, without waiting to be questioned by the provost, declared at once, that the lady had never failed to respond to his wishes in that respect. "Well, then, master provost," said the lady, "if he has always had from me as much as he wanted and wished, what, I ask, was I to do with what was left? Should I throw it to the dogs? Is it not much better to gratify with it a man who loves me more than himself, than to let it be lost or spoiled?" All the principal people of the city were present to hear this process, and after laughing heartily at this humorous question, they cried out, as with one voice, "The lady says well; she is quite right!" Before they broke up,

the law, by the interposition of the lord-provost, was moderated so far as to apply only to such women as wronged their husbands for the sake of money. So Rinaldo departed from the court, covered with shame and confusion, whilst the lady, snatched as it were out of the fire, returned victorious to her own house.

NOVEL VIII.

Fresco advises his niece, that if she could not endure to look at any disagreeable people, she should never behold herself.

Filostrato's novel had put the ladies into some confusion, as appeared by their blushes, when the queen turned immediately to Emilia, and desired her to begin. She, starting up as if she had been roused out of her sleep, spoke to this effect:—I have been so long lost in thought, that I shall now obey the queen, by relating a much shorter novel than I should have done, probably, had I more time to recollect myself. This will be concerning the foolish affectation of a certain young lady, which was very wittily reproved by her uncle, if she had had but sense enough to have taken it

A worthy man, named Fresco da Celatico, had a niece, called, out of fondness, Cesca, *i. e.* for Francesca, who, though her person was not amiss (she was no angel neither!) yet thought so highly of herself, that she was perpetually finding fault with men, women, and everything that she saw, without having the least regard to herself all the time; for by that means, she became such a disagreeable, fretful, and tiresome creature, that nothing was ever like her, and so proud withal, that, had she been of the blood royal of France, she could not have been more so. And if she walked along the street at any time, she did nothing but toss up her nose all the way, as if every one that she either saw or met was offensive to her. To omit the rest of her troublesome, ill-conditioned ways, it chanced one day that she came home, pouting extremely with pride and affectation, and sat down by her uncle; he said to her, "What is the reason, Cesca, that you come home so soon, this being a holiday?" When she, fit to die away with her airs, replied, "I have returned so early, because I could not have believed there had been such a number of frightful people, both men and women, in the country as I have met with to-day; there

was not one that I could like. I don't believe there is any woman in the world who has such an aversion to disagreeable people as I have: it is to avoid them, therefore, that I have come so soon." Fresco, then, who could no longer brook her inordinate affectation, replied roughly to her: "Niece, if disagreeable persons displease you so much, and you are willing to be at ease, be sure you never look at yourself." She, however, as empty as a pithless cane, though she thought herself as wise as Solomon, understood her uncle's meaning no more than a goose; but said, "she would look at herself as well as other people." Thus she remained in her ignorance, and, for what I know, still continues in the same state.

NOVEL IX.

Guido Cavalcanti neatly reprimands the folly of some Florentine gentlemen, who came unawares upon him.

The queen, perceiving that Emilia had finished her novel, and that only herself remained, excepting him whose privilege it was to speak last, began as follows:—Though you have robbed me of two of my novels, one of which I designed should have served me to-day; yet have I one left behind still, which contains something in the conclusion as pertinent, perhaps, as anything that has yet been spoken. Know, then, that formerly many good customs prevailed in our city, none of which are now remaining, thanks to avarice, the attendant of our growing wealth, which has long discarded them. This, amongst others, was one;—that, in divers parts of the town, the best families in the neighbourhood would meet together, and compose a society, consisting of a certain number of persons, taking care always to admit only such as were able to bear the expense of it. Every one entertained in his turn, at which time they would show honour to divers gentlemen and strangers upon their arrival in our city, and to many of the most worthy citizens, inviting them to those assemblies: once a year, also, at least, they would be dressed all alike, and they often rode in procession through the city, when they performed their tilts, and other martial exercises, especially on the great festival days, or when the news of some great victory had reached the city.

Amongst these societies of gentlemen, there was one, of which Signor Betto Brunelleschi was the principal, who was

desirous always of procuring Guido Cavalcanti to be one of their body, and not without reason; for, besides his being one of the best logicians in the world, as well as an excellent natural philosopher (for which they had no great regard), he was a most polite, good-natured man, as well as a delightful companion, and nobody knew what belonged to a gentleman better than himself: besides this, he was very rich, and ready always to reward merit wherever he found it. But Signor Betto was never able to draw him into their assembly, which they all attributed to his speculative way of life. And, because he was said to hold some of the Epicurean doctrines, the vulgar used to report, that all this study of his was only to learn whether there was a God or not. One day he was passing from St. Michael's church, along by the Ademari to St. John's, which was his usual walk. The large marble arches which are now at St. Reparata's, were then about St. John's church, and he chanced to be amongst them, the church door being shut, when Betto and his company came riding through the square. Spurring their horses, they came up to him before he perceived them, and one of them said, "Guido, you refuse to be of our society,—but when you have found out that there is no God, what good will it have done you?" Guido, seeing himself surrounded, immediately replied, "Gentlemen, you may use me as you please in your own territories;" and, laying his hand upon one of the arches, he leaped nimbly over it, and so made his escape. They looked, like people confounded, at each other, saying, that what he had spoken was without any meaning; for that they had no more to do there than any other persons, nor Guido less than themselves. Signor Betto then turned to them, and said, "It is yourselves, gentlemen, who are void of understanding; for he has very worthily, and in few words, said the severest thing in the world to us, whether you understood it or not: consider, then, these arches are the abodes of the dead, and he calls them our territories, to show us that we, and all other people as ignorant and unlearned as ourselves, are, in comparison with him and other men of letters, worse than dead men; and, therefore, so long as we are here, we may be said to be upon our own dunghills." They now all understood what Guido meant to say, and were a good deal ashamed, and from that time forth they said nothing more to provoke him, and always looked upon Signor Betto as a very subtle and sensible gentleman.

NOVEL X.

Friar Onion promises some country people to show them a feather from the wing of the Angel Gabriel, instead of which he finds only some coals, which he tells them are the same that roasted St. Laurence.

AFTER they had told all their different stories, and Dioneo perceived that only himself was left to speak, without waiting for any regular command, he enjoined silence on such as were commending Guido's deep reply, and thus began:—Though I boast it, ladies, as my privilege to relate what pleases me most, yet I intend not to-day to depart from the subject which you have all spoken so well upon; but, following your footsteps, I shall show with what a sudden shift a certain friar, of the order of St. Anthony, most artfully avoided the disgrace and confusion which two arch young fellows had prepared for him; and if, to make my story more complete, I spin it out a little in length, I hope it will not be disagreeable, as the sun is yet in the midst of heaven.

Certaldo, as you may all have heard, is a village in the vale of Elsa, dependent on the state of Florence, which, though small, has long been inhabited by many gentlemen and people of substance. Thither a certain friar Onion, of the order of St. Anthony, used to go once a year, as he found pretty good pickings, to receive the contributions of many simple people, and he met with great encouragement always, as much, perhaps, on account of his name, as from devout motives; for that country was famous for the best onions in all Tuscany. Now this friar was a little red-haired man, of a merry countenance, as artful a knave too as any in the world: add to this, that, though he was no scholar, yet was he so prompt and voluble of tongue, that such as knew him not, would not only have considered him a great orator, but have compared him even to Tully or Quinctilian. He was also a common gossip-acquaintance to the whole neighbourhood. Coming thither, therefore, in the month of August, according to custom, one Sunday morning, when all the honest people were met together in the church to hear mass, as soon as he saw a fit opportunity, he stepped forward and said:

"Gentlemen and ladies, you know it has been a commendable custom with you to send every year to the poor brethren of our Lord Baron, St. Anthony, both of your corn and

other provisions, some more, and some less, according to your several abilities and devotions, to the end that our blessed St. Anthony should be more careful of your oxen, sheep, asses, swine, and other cattle. Moreover, you are accustomed to pay, such of you especially as have their names registered in our fraternity, that small annual acknowledgment which I am now sent by my superior, namely, our lord-abbot, to collect. Therefore, with the blessing of God, after nones as soon as you shall hear the bells ring, you may all come to the church-door, when I shall preach a sermon as usual, and you shall all kiss the cross; and, besides this, as I know you all to be devoted to our lord, St. Anthony, I intend, as a special favour, to show you one of the feathers of the Angel Gabriel, which he dropped at the annunciation in the Virgin's chamber;" and, having made his speech, he returned to mass.

Whilst he was haranguing, there were two arch fellows in the church, one named Giovanni dei Bragoniera, and the other Biagio Pizzini, who, after they had laughed together at the father's relics, although they were his friends and acquaintance, resolved to play him a trick with regard to this feather. Understanding that he was to dine that day with a friend, as soon as they thought he might be set down at table, they went to the inn where he lodged, Biagio undertaking to keep his man in talk, whilst Giovanni ransacked his wallet to steal the feather, that they might see what he would then say to the people. Now the friar had a lad, named Guccio, with so many different nicknames and qualities, that the most fertile imagination was hardly able to describe them; and Father Onion used frequently to jest and say, "My rascal has in him nine qualities, any one of which if it had belonged either to Solomon, Aristotle, or Seneca, would have baffled and confounded all their philosophy, and all their virtue. You may suppose then what sort of creature he must be, that has nine such, without either philosophy or virtue to counterbalance them." If asked what those nine qualities were, he would answer in doggrel:

> "In sloth and lying he was ne'er outdone;
> For theft and envy equals he hath none:
> Forgetful, disobedient and uncivil;
> Lewd as a goat, and spiteful as the devil.

"Besides these qualities he has also many others, and one in

particular I cannot help laughing at, which is, that he is for taking a wife wherever he goes: and having a great black greasy beard, he is persuaded that all women must fall in love with him; or, should they take no notice of him, he will be sure to run after them. But yet he is a notable fellow to me in one respect, that if anybody has a secret to communicate, he will come in for his share of it; and should any one ask me a question, he is so fearful that I should not know how to make an answer, that he will be sure to say, Yes, or No, before me, just as he thinks proper."

But to return to our story. This fellow, Friar Onion left at the inn, with a particular charge to see that nobody meddled with anything belonging to him, especially his wallet, because it contained the holy relics. But Guccio loved the kitchen as well as the nightingale loves the boughs, particularly when any of the maids were alone there, and, as soon as his master was gone, down he went, leaving the chamber door open. In the kitchen he found a fat, squat, dirty, greasy, ill-favoured wench, and falling into discourse with her, he seated himself by the fireside, though it was in August, whilst she was busy cooking, and began to tell her he was a gentleman, and worth a great lot of money; that he could say and do wonders, and (without considering that his own hat was all over grease and dirt; that his jacket was nothing but a thousand different patches; that his breeches were torn throughout, and his shoes all to pieces) he talked as big as if he had been some lord, saying that he would buy her new clothes, and take her out of service, and that she should partake of his present possessions, as well as future fortunes, with a great deal more of that kind of stuff, mere froth and wind. The two young fellows, finding him thus engaged, were very well satisfied, supposing half their work to be done; and leaving the pair together, they went up stairs into the friar's chamber, which was unlocked, when the first thing they saw was the wallet: this they opened, and found a casket wrapped up in some folds of fine taffeta, and in it a parroquet's feather, which they supposed to be the same that Friar Onion had promised to shew the people; and surely at that time it was easy enough to impose upon them in that manner. The eastern luxury had not then reached Tuscany, which has since flowed in upon us, to the ruin of our country; the ancient simplicity still prevailed; nor was there a person that had ever heard of, not to say beheld such a thing as a parrot. Not a little pleased at meeting with this

feather, they took it away, and, that the box should not be empty, they put in some coals, which they saw lying in a corner of the chamber; and wrapping it up again as before, and making all snug, they walked off, waiting to see how the friar would behave when he found the coals instead of the feather.

The people who were at church being told that they were to see the angel's feather, went home and acquainted all their neighbours, and the news ran from one to another, so that the moment dinner was over, they all crowded to the town, in such a manner that every part was full, waiting for the sight. By and by, Friar Onion, having eaten a good dinner, and taken his nap after it, understanding that there were great multitudes expecting him, sent to his servant to fetch his wallet, and ring to church. The fellow, though loath to leave his mistress and the fireside, did as he was ordered, and fell to chiming the bells. As soon, then, as the people were all assembled, the friar, not perceiving that anything had been meddled with, entered upon his discourse, running over a thousand things proper to his purpose: and being come to the showing of the feather, he began, with a solemn confession; then lighting up two torches, and gently unwrapping the silken cover, having first pulled off his cap, he took out the box, and making some short ejaculations to the praise and honour of the Angel Gabriel, and of the relic, he opened it. When he saw that it was full of coals, he could not help secretly blaming himself for leaving such a fellow in trust, who, he imagined, had been imposed on by somebody or other; but yet, without so much as changing colour, or showing the least concern, he lifted up his eyes and hands to heaven and said, "O God, blessed for ever be thy power and might!" And shutting the box, he turned again to the people, and added:

"Gentlemen and ladies, you must all understand, that being very young, I was sent by my superior to those parts where the sun first appears, with an express command to inquire into the nature of porcelain, which, though it costs but little in making, affords more profit to others, than it does to us. For this purpose I embarked at Venice, and went through Greece; I proceeded thence on horseback, through the kingdom of Garbo, and through Baldacca; afterwards I came to Parione, and thence I made my way, not without thirst, to Sardinia. But why need I mention to you all these places? I coasted on still, till I passed the straits of St.

George, into Truffia, and then into Buffia, which are countries much inhabited, and with great numbers of people. Next I came to the land of Mendacity, where I found many of our own order, as well as of others, who avoid all labour and trouble, for Heaven's sake, taking no care for other people's sufferings, when their own interest is promoted thereby; and there they spend only uncoined money. Thence I went to the land of Abruzzi, where the men and women go upon socks over the mountains, and where it is the custom to dress swine in garments of their own guts; and, a little further on, I came among a people who carried bread in their staves, and wine in satchels. Leaving them behind me, I came to the mountains of Bacchus, where the waters all run downwards. Last of all, I arrived in India Pastinaca, where, I swear to you, by the habit I wear, that I saw serpents fly, a thing incredible to such as have never seen it: but I tell you no lie, witness Maso del Saggio, a great merchant whom I found there cracking nuts, and selling the shells by retail. Nevertheless, not being able to find what I went to look for, because the way thence to that country is by water, I returned to the Holy Land, where, in summer, a loaf of cold bread is worth four pence, and the hot is given away for nothing. There I found the venerable father, Blame-me-not-if-you-please, patriarch of Jerusalem, who, out of reverence to my habit, and love to our Lord Baron, St. Anthony, would have me see all the holy relics which he had in keeping, and which were so many, that were I to recount them, I should never come to an end: but yet, not to leave you altogether disconsolate, I shall now mention a few.

"First, then, he showed me a finger of the Holy Ghost, as whole and sound as ever: next a lock of hair of the Seraph that appeared to St. Francis, with the paring of a Cherub's nail, and a rib of the Verbum Caro, fastened to one of the windows; some vestments of the holy catholic Faith, and a few rays of that star which appeared to the wise men; a phial also of St. Michael's sweat, when he fought with the devil; the jaw-bone of St. Lazarus, and many others. And because I gave him two of the plains of Mount Morello, in the vulgar edition, and some chapters of the Caprezio, which he had been long searching after, he let me partake of his relics. And first, he gave me a tooth of the Sancta Crux, and a little bottle filled with some of the sound of those bells which hung in the temple of Solomon; a feather also of the Angel Gabriel, as I have told you, with a wooden patten, which the

good St. Gherrardo da Villa Magna used to wear in his travels, and which I have lately given to Gherrardo di Bonsi, at Florence, who holds it in great veneration. He gave me also some of the coals on which our blessed martyr, St. Laurence, was broiled, all which I devoutly received, and do now possess. It is true, my superior would not suffer me to make them public, till he was assured that they were genuine; but being now convinced of it by sundry miracles, as well as by letters received from the patriarch, he has given me leave to show them, and which, for fear of trusting any one with them, I always carry with me. Indeed, I have the angel's feather, for its better preservation, in a wooden box, and I have St. Laurence's coals in another: and the two are so like each other, that I have often mistaken them; and so it has happened now; for, instead of that with the feather, I have brought the box which contains the coals. This I would not have you call an error; no, I am well assured it was Heaven's particular will, now I call to mind that two days hence is the feast of St. Laurence. Therefore it was ordered that I should show you the most holy coals on which he was broiled, to kindle in your hearts that true devotion which you ought to have towards him, and not the feather: approach then, my blessed children, kneel with reverence, and uncover your heads with all due devotion, whilst you behold them. But first I must acquaint you, that whoever is marked with these coals, with the sign of the cross, may live secure for one whole year, that no fire shall have any power over him."

So, singing a hymn to the praise of St. Laurence, he opened the box, and showed the coals, which the simple multitude beheld with the utmost zeal and astonishment, and crowded about him with larger offerings than usual, entreating to be signed with them. Then, taking the coals in his hand, he began to mark all their white mantles, fine jackets and veils, with the largest crosses that could be made upon them, affirming, that what was consumed of the coals in this manner grew again in the box, as he had frequently experienced. Thus having crossed all the people of Certaldo, to his own great benefit, by this dexterous device, he laughed in his sleeve at those who had designed to have made a jest of him. And they being present at his discourse, and hearing this sudden shift of his, and how he had made it pass with the multitude, were ready to die with laughter. After the people were all departed, they went and told him, with all the pleasure in the world, what they had done, and returned

him his feather, which served him the following year to as good purpose as the coals had done that day.

[This tale was honoured by the formal censure of the Council of Trent, and is the one which gave the greatest umbrage to the Church. In Chaucer's 'Canterbury Tales' there is a similar satire on ludicrous relics. The Pardonere, who had just arrived from Rome, carried in his wallet, along with other treasures of a like description, part of the sail of St. Peter's ship, and the veil of the Virgin Mary:

> And with these relikes, whenne that he fond
> A poore persone dwelling upon lond,
> Upon a day he gat him more moneie
> Than that the person gat in monethes tweie.

A catalogue of relics rivalling in absurdity those of Chaucer's Pardonere, or Boccaccio's Friar Onion, is presented in Sir David Lindsay's 'Satyre of the Thrie Estaitis.' In the thirty-eighth chapter of 'Stephen's Apology for Herodotus,' we are told that a priest of Genoa, returning from the Levant, boasted that he had brought from Bethlehem the breath of our Saviour, in a vial, and from Sinai the horns which Moses wore when he descended from that mountain. Luther tells us, in his 'Table Talk,' that the Bishop of Mentz pretended to possess the flames of the bush which Moses beheld burning.]

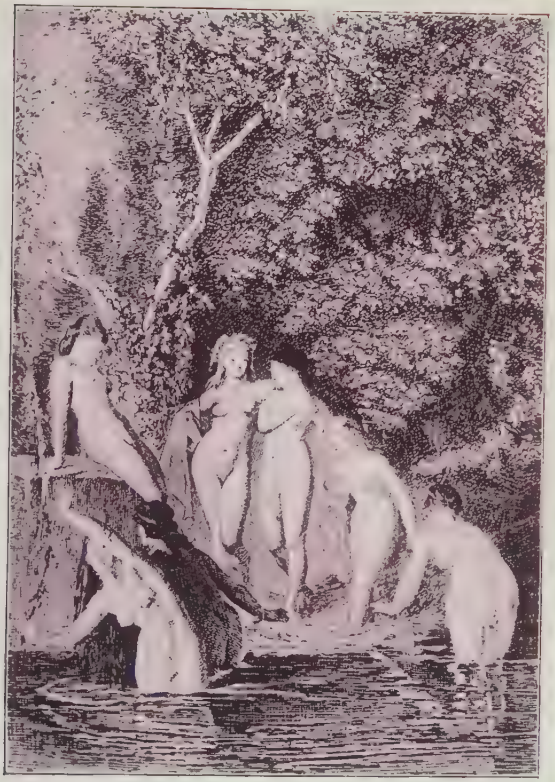
This novel afforded great mirth to the whole company, and they laughed heartily at the father, his pilgrimage, and his holy relics. The queen, knowing her reign to be at an end, took the crown from her own head, and placed it with a smile upon Dioneo's, saying, "It is now time for you to prove what a task it is to govern women. Be king, therefore, and rule in such a manner, that in the end we may have reason to praise you." Dioneo, accepting the crown, replied, merrily, "I doubt not but you may have often seen a better king among the chessmen than I shall make; yet assuredly, if you would obey me, as a real king should be obeyed, I would take care you should have plenty of that, without which no entertainment is ever thoroughly agreeable. But let us say no more on that head: I will reign as well as I can." Calling then the master of the household, he ordered what should be done during his own royalty; and then he added, "Ladies, we have had so many subjects already, showing the several devices and means of human industry, that I am at a loss what to give you, unless you will accept of the following, namely, concerning such tricks and strata-

gems, as women either out of love, or for their own security, have put upon their husbands, whether they have been detected or not." This seemed not so decent to some of the ladies, and they desired him to change it. But he replied, "Ladies, I know as well as you do what the subject is, and all that you can allege will have no weight with me to make me alter it, considering that the season now is such, that, provided we are circumspect in our actions, any discourse for a little amusement is allowable. Know you not, that through the malignity of the times the judges have now left their tribunals, the laws both Divine and human are silent, and every one has leave to do what he thinks necessary for his own preservation? Therefore, if we take a little more liberty than ordinary in our discourse, with no bad intention, but only to pass away our time in an innocent, inoffensive manner, I see no room for reflection. Besides, from the very first day of our meeting we have always kept within the bounds of decency, and so I hope we shall continue to do. Who is there also that is unacquainted with your modesty and virtue? which, so far from being shaken by any slight discourse, would be proof even against the terrors of death. And to tell you truth, whoever should see you averse to such little diversions, might suspect that your characters were not so clear as they should be, and that you refused to join in them for that reason; not to mention the little honour you do me, in first choosing me your king, and then refusing to obey my commands. Away then with this suspicion, more befitting base and wicked dispositions than such as yours; and, without farther hesitation, let every one think of some pleasant story."

Upon this they agreed that it should be as the king desired; and he then gave them leave to depart till supper-time. The sun was yet high, as the novels had been but short; therefore, whilst Dioneo, with the other gentlemen, were sat down to play at tables, Eliza called the other ladies apart, and said, "Ever since we have been here, have I desired to show you a place not far off, where I believe none of you ever were, and which is called the Ladies' Valley; nor have I had an opportunity before to-day of doing it. It is yet some hours till night, if you would choose then to go thither, I dare say you will be pleased with your walk." The ladies answered, that they were all willing, and, without saying a word to the gentlemen, they called one of their women to attend them, and after a walk of nearly a mile, they

came to the Ladies' Valley, which they entered by a straight path, whence there issued forth a fine crystal current, and they found it so extremely beautiful and pleasant, especially at that sultry season, that nothing could exceed it; and, as some of them told me afterwards, the plain in the valley was as exact a circle as if it had been described by a pair of compasses, though it seemed rather the work of nature than of art, and was about half a mile in circumference, surrounded with six hills of moderate height, on each of which was a palace built in form of a little castle. The descents from these hills were as regular as we see in a theatre, where the circle of each stage grows gradually less and less, till it comes to the bottom. The part that looks towards the south was planted as thick as they could stand together, with vines, olives, almonds, cherries, figs, and most other kinds of fruit-trees; and on the northern side were fine plantations of oak, ash, etc., so tall and regular, that nothing could be more beautiful. The vale, which had only that one entrance, was full of firs, cypress-trees, laurels, and pines, all placed in such order, as if it had been done by the direction of some exquisite artist, and through which little or no sun could penetrate to the ground, which was covered with a thousand different flowers. But what gave no less delight than any of the rest, was a rivulet that came through a valley, which divided two of the mountains, and running through the vein of a rock, made a most agreeable murmur with its fall, appearing, as it was dashed and sprinkled into drops, like so much quicksilver. Arriving in the plain beneath, it was there received in a fine canal, and running swiftly to the middle of the plain, formed a basin not deeper than a man's breast, which showed its clear gravelly bottom, with pebbles intermixed, so that any one might see and count them: the fishes also appeared, swimming up and down in great plenty, which made it wonderfully pleasant; whilst the water that overflowed was received in another little canal, which conveyed it out of the valley.

Hitherto the ladies all came together, and after much praising the place, and seeing the basin before them, and that it was very private, they agreed to bathe. Ordering, therefore, the maid to keep watch, and to let them know if anybody was coming, they stripped and went into it, and it covered their delicate bodies in like manner as a rose is concealed in a crystal glass. After they had diverted themselves there for some time with bathing, they clothed them-



selves again, and returned at a gentle pace, commending all the way the wonderful beauty of the spot: and coming to the palace, they found the gentlemen at play where they had left them. Pampinea said merrily to them, "We have put a trick upon you to-day."—"What," says Dioneo, "do you begin to act before you speak?"—"No, sir," quoth Pampinea. And she told them where they had been, what sort of a place it was, how far it was off, and what they had been doing. The king, upon her report, being very desirous of seeing it, ordered supper to be served immediately, which was no sooner ended than the gentlemen and their servants all went to this valley, and having viewed every part, as they were never there before, they agreed that nothing in the world ever equalled it. They bathed, therefore, and made what haste they could back, as it grew late, when they found the ladies dancing to a song of Fiammetta's, which being ended, they were all loud in their praises of this valley. The king then called to the master of the household, and gave orders, that dinner should be served there on the morrow, and beds carried for such as might choose to rest during the heat of the day. When this was over, he ordered in candles, wine and sweetmeats, and, having refreshed themselves, he bade them now prepare for a dance; and Pamfilo, by his appointment, having made a beginning, his majesty turned to Eliza, and said pleasantly to her, "Fair lady, you did me the honour of conferring upon me a crown yesterday; in return, I now fix upon you for a song: let it be such an one as is most agreeable to yourself." She smiled, and saying, "with all my heart," began with a sweet voice, the following—

SONG.

CHORUS.

O love, could I escape from thee,
I always would be free.

From early youth I chose
Thy service as a sweet repose,
And all my power to thee consign'd;
But see, at last,
Thou, cruel tyrant, and unkind,
Hast bound me in thy fetters fast.
O love, etc.

'Tis for a faithless swain,
I languish and complain;

Nor sighs, nor tears can move
His heart to love.
O love, etc.

The winds, with inauspicious breeze,
Waft my unheeded prayers away,
Whilst hourly I decay;
Yet neither life nor death can please.
Then yield, in pity to my woe,
That he thy bondage too may know.
O love, etc.

Cupid, I humbly ask of thee,
Or grant me this, or set me free;
This favour, if thou wilt bestow,
My youthful bloom
I shall resume,
And on my face again the rose and lily blow.

O love, could I escape from thee,
I always would be free.

Eliza concluded her song with a most piteous sigh, and all of them wondered what the words could mean; but the king, being in a good temper, called for Tindaro, and bade him bring out his bagpipes, to which they danced several dances; till a good part of the night being spent in that manner, they gave over, and went to bed.

THE SEVENTH DAY.

THERE was now not a star to be seen in the east, but that alone which we call bright Lucifer, which as yet shone gloriously in the dawning day; when the master of the household arose, and went with the necessary provisions to the Ladies' Valley, to have everything ready there, according to the king's command. Roused by the noise of the carriages, his majesty arose soon afterwards, and had all the company called, when they began their march just as the sun was appearing above the earth; nor did the nightingales and other birds ever seem to sing with such exquisite harmony as on that morning. Being ushered on their way by this music, they came to the Ladies' Valley, where, being saluted by choirs of many others, it appeared to them as if all the birds in the valley joined in concert to rejoice at their arrival.

Now, viewing it all over again, it seemed much more delightful than the day before, as the gaiety of the morning was still more conformable to the beauty of its appearance. After a repast of wine and sweetmeats, not to be behind-hand with the birds, they began to sing, whilst the valley all around echoed back their songs; and the birds, unwilling to be outdone, replied in new and more ravishing notes. At the usual hour the table was spread under the shade of the trees, by the side of that beautiful lake, and during the whole time of dining they amused themselves with observing the fishes swimming before them, which afforded various matter for discourse. When the tables were removed, they fell again to singing as merrily as before. Beds having been prepared in different parts of the valley, made close like pavilions, the king gave leave for such as desired it to go to sleep, and the rest had liberty to amuse themselves in the mean time as usual. At the appointed time they met by the basin side, near where they had dined, and sitting down on the carpets, which were spread there for them, the king desired Emilia to begin, and she, with a smile, complied.

NOVEL I.

Gianni Lotteringhi hears a knocking at his door, and wakes his wife, who makes him believe it is a spirit, and they both go to conjure it away with a certain prayer, after which the noise ceases.

Sir, I had much rather any one else had begun such a fine subject as this is, than myself; but, since it is your pleasure that I should be the first, I am ready to comply. I purpose, therefore, to relate what may be of use to you for the time to come; for, if other ladies are as timorous with regard to spirits as I am (although I know nothing certain about them, nor have I met with anybody yet that does), they will here learn a good and effectual prayer to drive them away.

There dwelt formerly at Florence, in the street of St. Brancazio, a certain wool-comber, called Gianni Lotteringhi, one more fortunate in his trade than wise in other respects; for, being an easy sort of a man, he was frequently chosen a director of the singers in new St. Maria's church, when they had their meetings at his house, and other little favours they shewed him, upon which he greatly valued himself. This was because he gave considerable alms to the brethren there,

and, in return for shoes, hoods, and cloaks, which they were daily getting from him, they presented him with the Pater Noster in the vulgar tongue, the song of St. Alexis, the lamentation of St. Bernard, the hymn of Lady Matilda, with more such sort of ware, which he set great store by, and kept carefully for his soul's health and welfare. Now he had a gay, handsome wife, called Tessa, the daughter of Mannuccio della Cuculia, an artful, sensible woman, who, knowing the simplicity of her husband, and being in love with Federigo di Neri, an agreeable young man, contrived with her maid that he should come to see her at a country-house, which Gianni had, at a place called Camerata, where she used to pass the summer, her good man coming sometimes thither to sup, and stay all night, and return in the morning to his prayers and his shop. Accordingly, Federigo came and spent that night with her, when it was agreed between them, in order to avoid the trouble of always sending for him, that, as often as he went to and fro, he should look to a vineyard, which was by the side of the house, where he would see an ass's skull fixed upon one of the poles there, and when the snout was turned towards Florence he might safely come, and if the door was shut, upon knocking three times, she would let him in: but if it was turned towards Fiesole, he should then depart, for he might be assured her husband was with her at that time.

By this contrivance they frequently had meetings. But one night it had happened, that, expecting Federigo to sup with her, she had provided a couple of fowls, when her husband chanced to come in late, at which she was greatly concerned, and they sat down together to a little bacon which she had boiled by itself, whilst she ordered the maid to carry, in a clean napkin, the fowls, with some eggs for sauce, and a bottle of wine, into the garden (to which there was a way without going through the house, and where she and her lover used frequently to meet), and to lay them under a certain peach-tree adjoining the fields. Unfortunately her hurry was so great, that she forgot to desire the maid to wait till Federigo came, to tell him that her master was then at home, and that he should take those things away with him. Therefore, Gianni and she being gone to bed, and the maid likewise, it was not long before Federigo came, and tapped gently at the door, which was so near to their chamber, that Gianni immediately heard it, as did his wife, who, to prevent any suspicion, pretended to be asleep. Presently he knocked

a second time, at which Gianni was surprised, and began to jog her, saying, "Do not you hear? somebody knocks at our door." She, who heard it better than himself, pretended to wake out of her sleep, and said, "What is the matter?"—"I tell you," quoth he, "that I thought somebody was at our door."—"At our door!" she replied. "Alas! do you not know what that is? It is a spirit, which, for several nights past, has terrified me so that I have covered myself over head and ears in the bed-clothes, and not dared to look about me again till it was broad day-light."—"Go," quoth Gianni, "why should you be afraid if it is so? For, before we went to bed, I said the *Te lucis*, and the *Intemerata*, with divers other good prayers, and I signed all the bed-posts with the cross, so that it can have no power over us." The lady now, to prevent Federigo's taking any offence at her, thought it best to get up, and let him understand, by some means or other, that Gianni was there: therefore she said to her husband, "What you have done may have secured yourself; but, for my part, I shall not think myself safe, unless we conjure it down now you are here."—"Conjure it down!" quoth Gianni; "how is that to be done?"—"Oh!" said she, "I know how to do it; for the other day, when I went to Fiesole for a pardon, one of those recluses, a most religious lady, seeing me afraid, taught me a certain prayer, which, she assured me, she had often tried to good purpose before she was a nun. Alas! I could never have the boldness to make use of it alone; but, as you are now with me, we will go together, and repeat it." Gianni declared that he was willing, and so they went softly to the door, whilst Federigo began to be uneasy at waiting there so long. "Now," said she to Gianni, "you must take care to spit when I desire you."—"I will," he replied. She then began her charm, and said, "Spirit, spirit, as you came, the same way you may go; but look in the garden, and you will find two fowls, some eggs, and a bottle of wine; drink of the wine, and go away, and hurt not me, nor my Gianni." Having done this, she said to her husband, "Spit, dear Gianni." Accordingly, Gianni spit. Federigo, who was without, and heard all this, was relieved from his jealousy, and, notwithstanding his disappointment, he had much ado to keep from laughing out, saying to himself, "I wish you had spit out your teeth." She repeated the charm three times, and then they went to bed. Federigo, who depended upon supping with his mistress, and was fasting, went to the peach-tree, found the

capons, wine, and eggs, carried them home, and made a good supper; and the next time they were together, they made themselves very merry about the charm.

Now some people tell the story otherwise; they say that the ass's head was turned towards Fiesole, but a labourer in the vineyard gave it a turn by chance with his stick, and so set it the wrong way, which occasioned Federigo's coming at that time; and that the charm she made use of was, "Spirit, spirit, go away in God's name; it was not I, but somebody else, that turned the ass's head. Plague on him, whoever it was; but I am here, with my husband:" also that the lover went away without his supper. But a certain old lady, a neighbour of mine, told me, that both stories were true, as she had heard when she was a child, and that the latter did not happen to Gianni Lotteringhi, but to one called Gianni di Nello, just such another simpleton as Gianni Lotteringhi. Then pray, ladies, take which charm you like best: both have been of service to others in this sort of cases, as you have heard. Try them and they may be as useful to yourselves.

NOVEL II.

Peronella puts her gallant into a tub on her husband's coming home, which tub the husband had sold; she consequently tells him that she had also sold it to a person who was then in it, to see if it was sound. Upon this the man jumps out, makes the husband clean it for him, and carries it home.

Emilia's novel was heard with a great deal of mirth, and the charm esteemed a very good one. The king then ordered Filostrato to follow, which he did in the following manner:— My dear ladies, the tricks which are put upon you by us men, and especially by your husbands, are so many, that if ever it happens that a woman does the like, you should not only be pleased to hear of it, but you yourselves should spread it every where, to let the men understand, that if they are cunning, you are so too. This must have a good effect, for when it is known that people are forewarned, nobody will go about so soon to deceive them. Who sees not then that this day's discourse being noised among the men, may not be a restraint upon them in that respect, when they come to find that you know how to serve them in the same way? I will tell you, therefore, what a woman, though but of mean rank, did to her husband in a moment, as it were, for her own safety.

It was not long since that a poor man at Naples married a young and handsome wife, named Peronella, and he being a mason, and she spinning every day, they managed to gain a tolerable livelihood. Now it happened that a young man in the neighbourhood took a liking to her, and making a discovery of his inclinations, it was at length agreed between them, that, as the husband went out every morning to his work, he should watch that opportunity to come to her, which accordingly he did more than once. But one morning amongst the rest, the honest man being gone abroad, and Giannello Strignario, for that was the gallant's name, visiting her as usual, in a little time the husband returned, though he was not used to come home till night, and finding the door bolted on the inside, he knocked, and then said to himself, "Thank Heaven, though I am poor, I have an honest and careful wife; for no sooner am I gone out than she makes all fast, that nobody should come in my absence to do us an injury." Peronella, who knew it was her husband by his manner of knocking, said, "Alas! Giannello, I am a dead woman; here's my husband come back—bad luck to him; I cannot imagine for what reason, unless it was that he saw you come in; but for God's sake, be it as it will, go you into that tub, whilst I open the door, and we shall see what this sudden return of his means."

Accordingly Giannello stepped into the tub, whilst she let her husband into the house; and, putting on an angry look, she said, "Pray what new fancy is this, your coming home so early to-day? It seems you mean to do no more work, as you have now got your tools with you. And what are we to live upon in the mean time? Do you think I will suffer you to pawn my gown, and what few clothes I have? I do nothing but spin night and day, till I have worn my fingers to the very stumps, and all will scarcely find us oil to our lamp. Husband, husband, there is not a neighbour we have but wonders, and makes jest of me, for all the labour I undergo, and yet you return here, with your hands in your pockets, when you ought to be at work." Then she began to cry and sob. "Oh, what a poor unfortunate wretch I am! in an ill hour was I born, and worse it was when I happened to meet with you! I could have had a young man that would have maintained me well, and I refused him for this creature here, who knows not how to value a good wife. Other women have a good time with their gallants; some have two or three, and make their husbands believe the moon is made of green

cheese; and because I am virtuous, and never think of such practices, for that reason I am used the worse. I see no cause why I should not have my gallants as well as they. I would have you to know, that I have had offers of money and other things from a great number of young gentlemen, but nothing of that kind could seduce me: no, I was never the daughter of such a mother, and yet you will come home when you ought to be at work."—"My dear," said the husband, "do not make yourself uneasy; I know well what a good woman you are, and have had farther proof of it this morning: I did go out to work, indeed; but neither of us then knew that it was the feast of St. Galeone, which is to be kept holy, and that is why I am come back: nevertheless, I have found means that we shall have bread for a month, for I have sold the tub, which you know has been long in our way, to this man whom I have brought with me, for five shillings."—"So much the worse," she answered; "you that go up and down, and should know things better, to sell a thing for five shillings, which I, a poor ignorant woman, that keep always within doors, considering the room it took up in our house, have now sold it to an honest man for six, and who had just got into it, as you came to the door, to see whether it was sound." When the husband heard this, he was much rejoiced, and said to the man he had brought, "Friend, you may go about your business; you hear it is sold for six, whereas you were to have given no more than five."—"With all my heart," said the honest man, and away he went. "But," quoth Peronella to her husband, "as you are now here, even make the agreement with the man yourself."

Giannello, who was listening to what passed between them, on hearing these words, came out of the tub, and said, as if he knew nothing of the husband, "Where is the good woman?" The husband, stepping forward, replied, "Here I am: what do you want?"—"Who are you?" answered Giannello, "I want the woman who sold me the tub."—"You may make the bargain with me, for I am her husband."—"Then," said Giannello, "the tub appears to be sound; but it seems as if you had kept dregs in it, for it is so crusted all over in the inside, that I cannot scratch one bit off with my nail; therefore, I will not have it till it is made clean."—"This shall never break the bargain," said Peronella, "my husband will soon clean it out for you." The husband said, with all his heart; and laying down his iron tools, and stripping to his shirt, he got a scraper, and going into the tub

with a candle, he fell to work. Whilst he was thus busied, Peronella put her head and one arm and shoulder into the mouth of the tub, which was not large, as if to see how he got on, and bade him scrape here and there, and there again, and take care that he did not leave a speck in it. While she was thus engaged, and completely stopping up the mouth of the tub, Giannello, who had not done all he came for before he was surprised by the husband's return, took the opportunity thus offered him, and the two jobs were finished at the same moment. Peronella drew her head out of the tub, the husband crept out, and handing the candle to Giannello, he said, "Here, honest man, take the candle, and see whether it is to your liking." He peeped into it, said it was all right, gave them the six shillings, and had it carried to his own house.

[This tale has been translated, by Boccaccio, from a story which may be found near the beginning of the ninth book of the 'Golden Ass of Apuleius.' It is the 'Cuvier' of La Fontaine.]

NOVEL III.

Friar Rinaldo has an affair with a lady in the neighbourhood, and he makes the husband believe that he is busy about a charm to cure their child of the worms.

FILOSTRATO having ended, Eliza was now ordered to speak, which she did as follows:—Emilia's conjuring down the spirit now brings to my mind another conjuring story, which, though it may not be equal to hers, yet, as I can think of no other, I shall relate it.

There lived at Siena a very agreeable young man, of a good family, called Rinaldo, who had long been in love with a beautiful lady, the wife of a wealthy neighbour. He was of opinion, that if he could contrive to speak with the lady without exciting suspicion, he should obtain what he desired. Finding no other opportunity, and the lady being big with child, he resolved to stand godfather. Accordingly, he ingratiated himself with the husband, made the proposal in the handsomest terms he could devise, and was accepted. Rinaldo, having thus become Madonna Agnesa's gossip, had the desired opportunity to declare to her in words the passion she had long before read in his eyes; but his soft speeches availed him little, though the lady did not appear

displeased at hearing them. Some time after, whatever was the reason, Rinaldo turned friar, and, whether that kind of life was to his liking or not, he persevered in it. For a while he seemed to have laid aside his love for the lady, and other little vanities, yet ere long he was the same person again, affecting an extraordinary elegance in his dress, making ballads and love-songs, and indulging in all sorts of mundane diversions.

But why am I so particular about this friar? Are they not all of the same stamp? Alas! to the scandal of a dissolute world, they are not ashamed to appear plump and ruddy, with their garments fine and delicate, whilst they walk along the streets, not like doves, so much as high-crested cocks: and what is worse (not to mention their chambers being filled with pots of rich conserves, perfumes, and other costly compositions, with bottles of fine distilled waters and oils, with vessels also of malmsey, and the best Greek wines, so that you would take them for a perfumer's or a druggist's shop), they are not ashamed, I say, to have it known they are gouty; supposing us to be so ignorant, as to imagine that abstinence and a coarse diet do not make people less corpulent and more healthful; or that constant fasting and prayer should not cause them to be pale and out of order: and as if we had never heard that St. Dominic and St. Francis thought themselves well clothed when they had one suit of coarse russet cloth to keep out the cold, without ever thinking of so many changes of fine apparel for mere show only, and which the simple credulous multitude is obliged to pay for.

Our friar then, falling into his former way of living, began to renew his suit more briskly than ever to this lady, who, thinking him perhaps more agreeable than before, did not much withstand it. One day, when he was very pressing, she answered him as those do who are not very loath to comply. "What!" she said, "do friars give their minds to such things?"—"Madam," he replied, "take but my habit off, and you will find I am like other men." The lady, laughing on one side of her mouth, and looking demure on the other, said, "How can I do such a thing? You know you stood godfather to my son, and therefore it would be a terrible sin, otherwise I am sure I should be willing to oblige you."—"My dear gossip, don't be a goose," said the friar. I do not deny that it is a sort of a sin, but God pardons greater ones on repentance. Tell me pray, which of the two is more nearly related to your son, I who held him at the font, or

your husband who begot him?"—"My husband, of course."—"Very well," says the friar, "and does not your husband lie with you? Then by consequence you may lie with me who am not so nearly related to your son as he." The lady, who was no great logician, was satisfied with this argument, or appeared to be so. "Who could withstand such convincing words as yours?" she said, and without making any more pother about their spiritual relationship, she let him do as he had a mind. Nor was this the only time, for the title of godfather gave them many opportunities of being together.

One day among the rest, Rinaldo went to visit her, and finding nobody with her besides a servant maid, he sent his companion with the girl into a pigeon-loft to teach her some prayers, whilst he and the lady, with a little infant of her's, went into the chamber, and locked themselves in. They had not been there a very long time before the husband came home unexpectedly, and was knocking at the chamber door, and calling to her to open it, before they were aware of his return. Madonna Agnesa was frightened to death, and said, "What shall I do? my husband is here, and will now find out the cause of our acquaintance." The friar having his cloak and hood off, replied, "Had I but my clothes on, we could find an excuse; but if you open the door, and he finds me in this manner, we shall both be ruined."—"Then," said she, "put on your clothes instantly, and when you have done so, take our child in your arms, attend to what I shall say, to make our words agree with mine, and leave the rest to me." Now calling to her husband, who continued knocking at the door, she said, "I am coming." Accordingly she went to let him in, and putting on a cheerful countenance, she said, "Husband, it was the greatest blessing in the world that Friar Rinaldo happened to be here to-day, for otherwise we had certainly lost our child." The husband was ready to faint away, and inquired how it happened? "The boy," quoth she, "had a fit, and I knew not what to do, when the friar luckily came in, and taking the child in his arms, he said, "Madam, it is owing to worms which lie at his heart, and would soon kill him; but, be not afraid, I will charm and destroy them all, so that before I leave him he shall be as well as ever." Now as we wanted you to say some prayers, and the maid did not know where to find you, he sent his friend to the top of the house to say them in your stead; whilst we shut ourselves up in this chamber, as nobody could be present at such a mystery besides the mother. He

has the child now in his arms, and only waits till his friend has made an end to conclude the whole process, for the child has come to himself already." The honest man, who, out of his great love for his child, was far from suspecting such a trick, fetched a deep sigh, and said, "I will go and see him."—"By no means," she replied, "for that will spoil the whole thing; but stay, I will see first if you may be admitted, and then call you." The friar, who heard the contrivance, was now dressed, and, having the child in his arms, and everything in readiness, he called out, "Madam, is not that your husband?"—"Yes," answered he, "I am here."—"Then come hither," quoth he, "and behold your son, whom I thought you would never more have seen alive. Take him, and in return make a statue of wax of the same bigness to the honour of St. Ambrose, through whose merits you have received this extraordinary favour."

The child, seeing his father, showed several little signs of fondness, whilst he received him with as much joy and wonder as if he had been raised from the dead, returning great thanks to the friar for what he had done. The companion, also, hearing all that had passed, came down into the chamber, and said, "I have gone through all the prayers you ordered me to repeat." Friar Rinaldo replied, "Brother, you have done well, and you see by our joint endeavours the child is recovered." The honest man on this treated them both with wine and sweetmeats, and they took their leave with great respect. And immediately he set about making the waxen image, and sent it to be set up with several others before the image of St. Ambrose; but not St. Ambrose of Milan.

NOVEL IV.

Tofano shuts his wife one night out of doors, and she, not being able to persuade him to let her in, pretends to throw herself into a well, and drops a big stone in; he runs thither in a fright; she slips into the house, and locking him out, abuses him well.

ELIZA had no sooner made an end, than the king turned to Lauretta, who immediately began to this effect:—O love, how great is thy prevailing influence! how various and subtle are thy devices! What artist, what philosopher, could ever think of or contrive such shifts and evasions, as thou teachest in an instant to those that follow thy ways?

All other instructions whatever are slow compared to thine, as appears by what has already been said on the subject: to which I mean to add the stratagem of a certain lady, conducted in such a manner, as nothing but love could ever have dictated.

There lived at Arezzo a certain rich man named Tofano, who had a very handsome wife, named Monna Ghita, of whom, all at once, and without knowing why, he became extremely jealous. This greatly vexed the lady, who would frequently demand of him his reasons for such a suspicion; and he being able to assign none, but such as were general, or nothing to the purpose, she resolved to plague him with the real evil, which hitherto had only been imaginary. Having observed that a certain young gentleman had taken particular notice of her, she encouraged him so far, that they only waited for a favourable opportunity to put their design into execution. Amongst the rest of her husband's bad qualities, he had taken, she perceived, to drinking, which she not only seemed pleased with, but would persuade him to drink more, and make him drunk as often as she could. In this way she first found an opportunity of being with her lover, and from that time, they met continually, and by the same means. She depended indeed so much upon this drunken disposition of her husband's, that she would not only bring her lover into the house, but even go out and spend the greatest part of the night along with him, his residence not being very far off.

Matters continuing thus, the husband began to perceive that, whilst she encouraged him to drink in that manner, she scarcely tasted wine herself; and thence he was led to suspect, as was really the case, that she made him drunk with a view only to her own private purposes, during the time of his being asleep. Desiring to have some positive proof of this, he pretended once (without having drunk a drop all that day), both in his words and actions, to be the most disordered creature that could be; perceiving which, and thinking that he had then had a dose sufficient, and that he would sleep without any more liquor, she straightway put him to bed. Tofano finding his wife did not come to bed, got up, and bolted the door, and then went and sat at the window to wait for her coming home, that she might see that he was acquainted with her doings, and there he continued till her return. She, finding the door bolted, was exceedingly uneasy, and tried several times to force it open. After Tofano had

suffered this for some time, he said, "Madam, you give yourself trouble to no purpose, for here you shall not come: go back, if you please, for you shall enter these doors no more, till I have showed you that respect, which these ways of yours require, before all your relations and neighbours." She then begged, for Heaven's sake, that he would open the door, saying, that she had not been where he imagined; but that, as the evenings were long, and she could neither sleep all the time, nor sit up by herself, she had gone to see a gentlewoman in the neighbourhood. But all was to no purpose, he seemed resolved that the whole town should be witnesses of their shame, when otherwise they would have known nothing of the matter. The lady, finding her entreaties of no effect, had recourse to threats, and said, "Either open the door, or I will make you the most miserable man that ever was born." Tofano replied, "And which way will you do it?" She, whose wits were sharpened by love, continued, "Before I will suffer such a disgrace, as you mean wrongfully to fasten upon me, I will throw myself directly into this well, and when I am found there afterwards, everybody will conclude that you did it in one of your drunken fits; and then there will be no help for you but to fly your country, and lose all your property, or be put to death for murdering your wife." All this, however, having no effect upon him, she cried out, "I can no longer bear your scorn, God forgive you for being the cause of my death!" and the night being so dark that they could scarcely see one another, she ran towards the well, took up a great stone that lay by the well-side, and crying aloud, "God forgive this act of mine!" she let it fall into the well.

The stone made a great noise when it came to the water, which Tofano hearing, firmly believed that she had thrown herself in, and taking the rope and bucket he ran to help her out. She meanwhile stood concealed by the side of the door, and seeing him go towards the well, she got into the house, and made all fast; then going to the window, she began to say to him, "Why, husband, you should use water whilst you are drinking, and not after you have made yourself drunk." Tofano, seeing her laugh at him, returned, and, finding the door bolted, begged of her to open it. But she now changed her note, and began to cry out, "You drunken, worthless, troublesome wretch! you shall not come in here to-night; I can no longer bear with your evil practices; I will let all the world know what sort

of a person you are, and what hours you keep." Tofano, on the other hand, being grievously provoked, used all the bad language he could think of, and made a most terrible uproar. The neighbours were all roused out of their beds, and, coming to their windows, inquired what was the matter. Upon this she began to lament and say, "It is this wicked man, who is always coming home drunk at all hours of the night. I have endured this a long time, and said a great deal to no purpose, and now I wanted to try if I could not shame him out of it by locking him out." Tofano, on the contrary, told them how the matter was, and threatened her exceeding. "There!" said she to the neighbours, "Now you see what sort of a man he is: what would you say if I were in the street and he within doors, as I am? Then you might think he was in the right. Take notice, I beseech you, how artful he is: he says I have done that which he seems to have done himself, and talks something about the well; but I wish he was in it, that he might have some water as well as wine."

The neighbours all joined in blaming Tofano, deeming him the person in fault, and giving him many hard words for his usage of his wife; and the thing was noised about the city, till her relations heard of it, who came thither in a body, and inquiring of one neighbour and another how it was, they took Tofano, and beat him very severely. Afterwards they went into the house, and carried the lady away with them, with all that was hers, threatening Tofano with farther punishment. And now, finding the ill effects of his jealousy, and still having a regard for his wife, he got some friends to intercede with her to come home again, promising never more to be jealous, and giving her leave for the future to do as she would. Thus, like a simple knave, he was glad to purchase peace, after having been to the last degree injured.

[The 'Calandra' of Cardinal Bibbiena, the best comedy that appeared in Italy previous to the time of Goldoni, is taken from this tale; so also is one of Duncourt's plays, and it probably suggested to Moliere the plot of his celebrated comedy, 'George Dandin.' The story, however, had been frequently told before the time of Boccaccio, being one of the fabliaux of the 'Trouveurs,' published by Le Grand (vol. iii., p. 143). It appears in the still more ancient tales of Petrus Alphonsus, and in one of the French versions of 'Dolopator, or the Seven Wise Masters.']

NOVEL V.

A jealous man confesses his wife under a priest's habit, who tells him that she is visited every night by a friar; and, whilst he is watching the door, she lets her lover in at the house-top.

LAURETTA having made an end, the king, without loss of time, pointed to Fiammetta, who began in this manner:—The preceding novel brings to my mind the story of another jealous person, which I will relate, being of opinion that those husbands are justly served in that manner, who are jealous without reason. And if legislators, when they make their laws, could be supposed to think of everything, I imagine they would decree no other punishment than what is ordered in cases of self-defence: for those jealous people are frequently the death of their wives. All the week long are they kept mewed up in their houses, and when holidays come, that they should have some ease and diversion, as all other people according to the laws both of God and man have then rest, yet on those days are they more confined than at any other time; so that none are so wretchedly enslaved as themselves. Therefore I conclude that a trick put upon a husband, who was jealous without any reason, will by you be rather commended than blamed.

There lived in Arimino a certain rich merchant, who had an agreeable woman for his wife, of whom he was immoderately jealous, and for no other reason in the world, but that as he was very fond of her himself, and knew that it was her whole study to please him; so he imagined every one else would like her as well, and that she would be as desirous to oblige them; which showed him to be one of a wicked disposition, as well as of little understanding. He consequently kept so strict an eye over her always, that no felon under sentence of death could be more narrowly watched. So far from going out to feasts at any time, or to church, or out of doors, under any pretence whatever, she was not suffered to look out of the window; so that she led a most wretched life, and so much the worse, as she knew herself to be innocent.

Thus, finding herself so wrongfully treated, she resolved, for the time to come, to give him some reason for such usage. And as she had no opportunity of seeing people in the street, and knew that there was an agreeable young man

living in the next house, she looked about to see if there was any chink in the wall, through which she might have an opportunity of speaking to him, to make him an offer of her love, and to have him come to her sometimes, if such a thing could be contrived, in order to spend her life with a little more comfort, till her husband should be cured of his jealousy. At last, in a corner of the room, she espied a crack which looked into a chamber of the next house, and she said to herself, "Now if this should prove to be Filippo's chamber" (for that was the young gentleman's name), "my scheme would be half accomplished." She set her maid to work to ascertain the truth upon this point, and soon learned that the young man did sleep there all alone. She now made it her business to visit that place pretty often, and put little sticks and straws through into her neighbour's chamber, which he soon perceiving, came to the wall to see what it meant. Then she called to him softly; he knew her voice and answered; a few words sufficed to make her mind known to him, which being quite to his satisfaction, he contrived to enlarge the opening on his own side, taking care all the time that nobody should perceive it. From that time they had frequent conferences together, and could touch each other's hands, but no more, because of the husband's extraordinary care and jealousy.

Now Christmas-day drawing near, the lady said to her husband, that, with his leave, she would go to church that day, to confess and receive the sacrament, like other good Christians. "And pray what sins can you have committed," he replied, "that you should want to confess?"—"What!" quoth she, "do you take me for a saint? Though you keep me shut up in this manner, yet I must sin as well as other people; but I am not going to tell them to you, as you are no priest." These words occasioned such a strong suspicion in him, that he was resolved to know what those sins were; and having determined what means to use, he told her that he was willing; but that she should go only to their chapel, and that betimes in the morning, and confess to their chaplain, or some person that he should appoint, and to no other, and return home directly. The lady seemed partly to know his design, and without making any other reply, said she would do as he desired. On Christmas-day, then, she rose betimes in the morning, and went to the chapel, as her husband had directed her. He also went to the same place, got there first, and having agreed with the priest what to do, he

put on a gown, with a great hood that almost covered his face, such as we see priests wear sometimes, and drawing it over his eyes, sat himself down in the choir. The lady, upon coming into the chapel, inquired for the priest; who, hearing from her that she wanted to confess, told her, that he could not stay to hear her himself, but would send one of his brethren. Accordingly he sent the jealous husband, in an ill hour for him, as it happened, who had not so well disguised himself, but she immediately knew him, and said to herself, "Thank Heaven, from a jealous fool he has become a priest: but I will take care to give him what he seeks for."

Affecting then not to know him, she sat down at his feet. The jealous gentleman had put some little stones into his mouth, to alter his voice, thinking himself well enough disguised as to everything else. Coming then to the confession, amongst other things, she told him, that, though married, she was yet in love with a priest, who came and lay with her every night. When the confessor heard this, he felt as if a knife was stuck into his heart, and were it not for his desire to learn something farther, he would have gone away that moment, and left her on her knees. Keeping his seat, then, he said to her, "Well, but how is it? Does not your husband lie with you?"—"Yes, he does, sir," she replied. "Then," continued he, "how can the priest lie with you at the same time?"—"I know not how he does it, but there is not a door in the house but opens upon his touching it; he tells me also, that, upon coming to our chamber, before he opens the door, he says some certain words, which throw my husband asleep, and then he comes in, and lies with me, and the other never knows it."—"O, madam," quoth the confessor, "that is a very bad thing; you must leave off such practices entirely." —"Ah, father," answered she, "I know not how to do it, I love him so well."—"Then I can give you no absolution."— "I am sorry for that," she replied; "but I came here to speak the truth: if I could leave off, I would tell you so."— "I am sorry for you, as I see your soul is in a state of damnation; but I will offer up my particular prayers for you, which may be of service, and I will send a person to you at certain times, when you may inform him if you think you have received any benefit, and in that case we will proceed farther." The lady replied, "Sir, never think of sending anybody to our house, for my husband is so unreasonably jealous, that all the world could never beat it out of his head but that he

came with a bad intent, and I should not have one good day for this twelvemonth."—"Madam," he rejoined, "have no care for that, for I shall manage in such a manner, that you will hear no more from him upon that score."—"If you can do that," said the lady, "I am content." And having made an end of her confession, and had her penance assigned her, she got up and went to mass.

The husband, ready to burst with fury, put off the priest's habit, and went home, waiting to find the priest and his wife together, in order to wreak his vengeance upon both; whilst she went out of the church, seeing plainly by his looks that she had given him but a bad Christmas-box, though he endeavoured to conceal both what he had done and meant farther to do. Resolving then to wait the next night at the door for the priest, he said, "I shall go out to sup and stay all night; be sure, therefore, you lock the street door, and that upon the stairs, as also your chamber door, and when you are disposed you may go to bed." She wished him a good night, went immediately to the chink in the chamber, and made the usual sign, when Filippo came to her, and she told him what she had done that morning, and what her husband had said afterwards, adding, "I am confident he will never stir from the door all night long; do you contrive a way, then, to come in at the top of the house." He replied, full of joy, "Depend upon it, Madam, I will." When night came, therefore, the jealous husband armed himself privately, and lay concealed in the ground-room, whilst his wife made the doors fast, especially that upon the stairs, so that he could not come up to her: and the young man, when he thought it proper time, came by a secret way into her chamber, where they enjoyed themselves all night, without fear of interruption. The husband, in the mean time, continued supperless all night long, uneasy to the last degree, and almost starved to death with cold, waiting by the door for the priest. Day appearing at last, and nobody coming, he composed himself there to sleep. Rising at the third hour, and the door of the house being now opened, he came in, pretending to come from another place, and called for his breakfast. Soon afterwards he sent a messenger to his wife, as from the priest who had confessed her, to know if that person had come to her since. She, who understood full well the nature of the message, replied, "No, he did not come that night, and if he left off visiting her, she might forget him, although she had no desire to do so."

What more need I say to you? The husband continued to watch every night, and the wife and her gallant were together all the time. At last, being out of all manner of patience, he demanded of her, with the utmost wrath in his looks, what it was that she had confessed to the priest? But she refused to tell him, saying that it was neither just nor reasonable. "Vile woman?" he cried, "I know in spite of you, what it was, and will make you confess who this priest is, that lies with you every night, by virtue of his enchantments, or else I will cut your throat." She replied, "It is false; I never lay with any priest."—"What!" said he, "did you not say so and so to the priest who confessed you?" —"Not," she replied, "for him to tell you again; but if you were present, it is a different thing: then, to be plain with you, I did say so."—"Now tell me," quoth he, "who this priest is, and quickly."

She smiled and said, "I am always glad to see a wise man led (by the horns as it were) by a simple woman; though you deserve not that character, since you have suffered yourself to be transported by an unreasonable fit of jealousy, without knowing why; therefore, the more weak you are, the less is my glory. Do you think my eyes are as bad as your understanding? No; I knew very well who the priest was that confessed me, and that was you. But I was resolved to give you what you wanted, and I think I have done so. But if you were as wise as you would be thought, you would never have desired to come at your wife's secrets in that manner, and would have known, without any vain suspicion, that every word was true which I said, and without the least crime or offence. I told you I loved a priest: were not you, my unworthy husband, then a priest? I said, no door could be kept shut when he had a mind to come to me: and is not that literally true? I added that the priest lay with me every night. And pray when did you lie from me? And when you sent to know if he was with me that night—you know that very time you had not been with me—I answered that he had not been with me. Who but a person blinded with jealousy, like yourself, but must have understood these things? And yet you kept watch all night at the door, and would have made me believe that you were gone elsewhere to sup and spend the night. Consider a little better, and behave like a man, and do not make a fool of yourself any longer, in the eyes of one who is acquainted with all your ways, as I am. Leave off this extraordinary care upon

my account; for, I assure you, were I disposed to be what you suspect, had you a hundred eyes, whereas you have only two, I could do it over and over again, and you be never the wiser."

The poor jealous creature, who had thought himself very cunning before, now saw how he was despised, and, without more words, devested himself of that foolish and troublesome disposition, ever after esteeming his a wife virtuous and prudent woman. And she had no further occasion to make her lover come in at the top of the house, as cats do; for the door was open afterwards whenever they had a mind to be together.

[This story is an ingenious improvement upon the Fabliau 'Du Chevalier qui confessa sa Femme.' It has been frequently imitated. In the 78th of the 'Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles,' entitled 'Le Mari Confesseur,' a lady who is confessed by her husband under the disguise of a priest acknowledges a criminal intercourse with a squire, a knight, and a priest. On hearing this, the husband bursts out into an indignant exclamation. "Were you not," says she, with some presence of mind, "a squire when I married you, were you not afterwards a knight, and are you not now a priest?" This is copied by Lafontaine, in 'Le Mari Confesseur.']

NOVEL VI.

Isabella, being in company with her gallant, called Leonetto, and being visited at the same time by one Lambertuccio, her husband returns, when she sends Lambertuccio away with a drawn sword in his hand, whilst the husband escorts Leonetto safely to his own house.

THEY were all pleased with Fiammetta's story, declaring that the woman had served the brute exactly right. And it being concluded, the king ordered Pampinea to go on, who then said:—There are many people so foolish as to affirm, that love deprives persons of their understanding, and that they who are in love are out of their wits. But how ridiculous this assertion is, will appear by what has been said before, and also by what I am now going to tell you.

In our city, abounding with everything that is good, there was formerly a beautiful lady, wife to a certain worthy knight, who desiring a little variety, as will sometimes happen, began to grow indifferent towards her husband, casting her eyes upon a certain young spark, called Leonetto, one of no

great family, but agreeable enough; he likewise began to show the same good will towards her; and it was not long before their wishes were accomplished. Now it happened, that another gentleman was in love with her also, called Lambertuccio, one by no means agreeable to her; but he ceased not to solicit her in all manner of ways, threatening at the same time, as he was a man of note and power, to lessen and expose her, unless she would comply with his desires. This terrified her so much, that she thought herself obliged to listen to him.

Being now, that it was summer time, at one of their country houses, and her husband gone from home to make some stay, she sent for Leonetto to come and be with her in the meantime. He obeyed her summons with great pleasure. Lambertuccio, knowing also that her husband was abroad, came all alone on horseback, and knocked at the gate. Her maid, seeing him there, ran up stairs to her mistress, who was in her chamber with Leonetto, and said, "Madam, Signor Lambertuccio is here below." The lady was in the greatest perplexity imaginable, and desired Leonetto not to mind stepping behind the curtain of the bed till the other was gone. Leonetto, who feared him as much as she did, went and hid himself there, whilst she ordered her maid to go and let Lambertuccio in. Accordingly he dismounted, hung his horse's bridle at the door, and was immediately shown up stairs; when she, meeting him at the top, asked, with a smile, how she came to be favored with the visit? "My life!" quoth he, "I understood your husband was abroad, and it was for that reason I came to see you." Thereupon they went to her room, and locked themselves in.

While they were diverting themselves there, the lady's husband returned, quite unexpectedly. As soon as the maid saw him, she came suddenly into the chamber, and said to her mistress, "Madam, my master is returned, and now in the court." The lady was quite confounded at hearing this, and, considering that she had two men in the house, and that the knight could not be concealed, on account of his horse, she gave herself over for lost: yet, resolving at length what to do, she said to Lambertuccio, "Sir, if you have any regard for me, and are willing to save me from destruction, pray do as I shall direct you. Go down stairs with an angry countenance, and your sword in your hand, saying, 'I vow to Heaven, if ever I meet with him any where else—.'

And if my husband should offer to stop you, or ask any questions, say nothing more than that; but mount your horse directly, and ride away, nor offer to stay with him upon any account whatever." Accordingly, he obeyed her directions, and went down stairs with his naked sword in his hand, and his face all crimsoned, both by his recent exertions and his vexation at the knight's inopportune return. The latter, meanwhile, on entering the courtyard, had been surprised to see the horse there; and was still more so when he went to the door and met Lambertuccio coming out with such a fierce countenance, and heard him talk in that manner; "Pray what is the matter, sir?" he said to him. The other put his foot in the stirrup, muttered only these words, "If ever I meet the villain again——," and rode away. The knight, going up stairs, found his wife at the stair-head, terrified out of her wits, and said to her, "What is the reason of Lambertuccio's going away in so much heat and fury?" When she, drawing nearer to her chamber, that Leonetto might hear, replied, "My dear, I never was so frightened in my whole life. A gentleman whom I never saw before, ran in here, and Lambertuccio after him with a drawn sword, and finding the chamber-door open, he came trembling into it, saying, 'I entreat you, Madam, to protect me, otherwise I shall be murdered in your very presence.' I stood up, and was going to ask him who he was, and what was the matter, when Lambertuccio was at the top of the stairs, roaring out, 'Where is the villain?' Upon this, I ran to the chamber-door, and stopped him as he was just coming in, when he was so civil to me indeed, after he saw I was unwilling he should come into the chamber, that, after a few words, he went back again just as you met him."

"My dear," said the husband, "you did quite right; it would have been a great discredit to us to have had anybody murdered in our house; and Lambertuccio was highly to blame to pursue a person hither. But where is the gentleman?" "He is hid somewhere or other," she replied; "I know not where."—"Where are you?" cried the knight, "you may come out without any danger." Leonetto, who had heard all this, came out from where he was concealed, much terrified, as indeed he had reason; when the knight said to him, "Pray what affair is this that you have had with Lambertuccio?"—"Nothing," he replied, "in the world, that I know of; so that I am convinced he has either lost his

senses, or else mistakes me for some other person; for, upon seeing me in the street, at a distance from your house, he drew his sword, and said, 'Villain, thou art a dead man!' I stayed to ask no questions, but made the best of my way, and came hither, where, thanks be to heaven and this lady, I have found protection."—"Then," said the knight, "be under no fear; I will see you safe home, when you may make inquiry what the ground of his quarrel with you is." After supper, then, he mounted him upon one of his horses, and conducted him to Florence to his own house. And that night, by the lady's direction, Leonetto had a private conference with Lambertuccio, when they so planned it, that, though there was much talk afterwards about it, the husband never knew how he had been tricked by his wife.

[The original of this story is a tale in the Greek Syntipas, the most ancient European form of the 'Seven Wise Masters,' but it has been omitted in some of the more modern versions. There are corresponding stories in Petrus Alphonsus, Le Grand's 'Fabliaux,' Bandello, and Parabosco. One or other of these tales suggested a part of Beaumont and Fletcher's comedy of 'Woman pleased' (Act II, Scene 6), where Isabella in a similar manner conveys two lovers out of her chamber, when surprised by the coming of her husband.]

NOVEL VII.

Lodovico being in love with Beatrice, she sends her husband into the garden, disguised like herself, so that her lover may be with her in the mean time and he afterwards goes into the garden and beats the husband.

ISABELLA'S quick and lucky thought was admired by the whole company, when Filomena began, by the king's command, to this effect:—You must understand, that at Paris dwelt a certain gentleman, a Florentine, who, being a little reduced, was forced to go into trade, by which he acquired a great deal of wealth. He had only one son, named Lodovico, who, having regard to the nobility of his father, more than to anything of business, was, instead of being brought up in a warehouse, sent, with some other young noblemen, into the service of the king of France, where he acquired all the accomplishments that belonged to a fine gentleman. Being one day in company with certain knights, who were just retured from the Holy Land, and talking of beauties in

England, France, and other countries, one of them declared, that, in all parts of the world, of all the women that ever he saw, he never met with any to come up to Beatrice, the wife of Egano de' Galluzzi, of Bologna; to which his companions, who had been with him there, agreed.

Lodovico, on hearing this, was possessed with such a desire to see her, that he could think of nothing else; and designing to go and make some stay there, if she proved to his liking, he pretended to his father that he had an inclination to go to the Holy Land, and obtained his very reluctant consent. Changing his name then to Anichino, he came to Bologna; and, as fortune would have it, saw Beatrice at her window the very next day, when he found her beauty to exceed even his warmest imagination, and, being quite enamoured, he resolved not to depart from Bologna till he had obtained his desire. Pondering, therefore, which was the most likely way to succeed, he supposed, that if he could but get to be a servant to the husband, he might probably carry his point. Accordingly, he sold his horses, and disposing of his servants, with orders never to take notice of him, he told his landlord, that he should be glad to get into the service of some person of distinction, if such a place could be met with. The landlord replied, "You are just such a person as would suit a gentleman here, called Egano, who has a great number of servants, and will always have well-looking, genteel people about him, like yourself: I will speak to him for you." This he did, and Anichino was immediately taken into the family, greatly to his satisfaction. Continuing then with Egano, where he had daily opportunities of seeing the lady, he gained so far upon him by his good behaviour, that Egano could do nothing without him, and made him sole director of all his affairs.

One day it happened, as Egano was gone out fowling, and left him behind, that Beatrice (who as yet knew nothing of his love, but had always commended his most engaging behaviour) made him sit down with her at chess, and Anichino, as it was his whole desire to please her, contrived to let her win, with which she was vastly delighted.—At length, all the women being gone out of the room, and they left by themselves, he heaved a deep sigh. She looked, and said, "What is the matter with you, Anichino? Are you uneasy because I win?"—"Madam," he replied, "it is a thing of more consequence which occasioned that sigh."—"Then, by the regard you have for me," quoth she, "I conjure you to tell it

me." When Anichino saw himself entreated by his love for her, whom he valued beyond all the world, he gave a greater sigh than before. She desired again to know the reason. "Madam," he replied, "I am extremely afraid lest I should offend you by so doing; I doubt also if you would not speak of it to some other person." She made answer, "Be assured I shall not be offended; nor shall I ever speak of it again, unless you give me leave."—"Then," said he, "as I have your promise, I will reveal it." And he told her, with tears in his eyes, who he was; what he had heard of her, and where; and how he came to be a servant to her husband. He entreated her, in the most humble manner, to have pity on him, and accept of this secret offer of his love; or, if that was too great a favour for him to expect, that he might continue in the same condition as before; and that she would be pleased only to let him admire her. O! how singularly sweet are these Bolognian dispositions! In cases of this sort how worthy of praise! They delight not in people's tears and sighs; but, to soft and amorous entreaties, they are ever easy of access. Were I able to give them their due praise, my voice should never faint on so agreeable a subject. The lady had her eyes fixed upon him all the time he was speaking, and giving credit to his words, she began to conceive the same passion in her heart for him. "Anichino," she replied, "be of good cheer; you have effected in a moment (the small time only that you have been speaking), that which all the lords and gentlemen, who have been daily soliciting me, could never bring to pass: so that now I am more yours than my own. You have deserved my love, and you shall have it: come, therefore, to my chamber about midnight." Upon this they parted, and he waited with great impatience for night.

Egano was now returned from fowling, and, being weary, went, as soon as he had supped, to bed, and the lady with him, leaving the door open, as she had promised. At the time appointed, Anichino went into the bed-chamber, and shutting the door again, he stepped gently to the lady's side of the bed, when, laying his hand upon her breast, he found she was awake. Instantly she seized it with both hers, and held him strongly, turning herself in bed at the same time, till she made her husband wake, when she said to him, "My dear, I would say nothing to you last night, because you seemed to be weary; but tell me, which of your servants do you believe to be the most faithful, and respect the most?"

Egano replied, "What a strange question this is! Do not you know that I never loved, and put such confidence in any servant, as I now do in Anichino? But why do you want to be informed?" Anichino, perceiving Egano to be awake, and hearing them talk together, endeavoured several times to draw his hand away, and get out of the room, imagining that she had put a trick upon him; but she held him so fast, that he could not. She then replied to Egano, saying, "I will tell you: I once thought as you do, and that he was the most trusty person about you, but I was mistaken; for he had the assurance, after you were gone out yesterday, to make an offer of his love to me; whilst I, to give you manifest proof of the fact, seemed to consent, and appointed to meet him this night under the pine-tree, in the garden. Now my intention was never to go thither; but if you have a mind to be convinced of his villainy, you need only slip on one of my petticoats, and put a veil over your head, and I am sure you will find him."—"Then," quoth he, "most certainly will I go." Rising, therefore, and disguising himself in that manner, as well as he could in the dark, he went into the garden to wait for Anichino. As soon as he was gone out, she rose also, and made fast the door. Anichino, who had been in the most horrible fear, and had endeavoured all he could to get from her, cursing both her and her love a thousand times over, and himself likewise, for giving credit to her, now at last finding out what was her design, was the happiest man imaginable.

At length, when she thought he had been as long with her as it was safe for him to stay, she said, "I beg of you to take a cudgel, and go into the garden; and, pretending as if this was done only to make trial of my virtue, give him some hard language, as though you meant it for myself, and cudgel him soundly." Accordingly he rose, took a good stick with him and went into the garden, where Egano, seeing him come towards the pine-tree, hastened with a great deal of seeming pleasure to meet him. Then said Anichino, "What! you wicked woman, are you come? and could you think I would do such a thing by my master? I will make you repent your baseness." And lifting up his cudgel, he laid on to some purpose.—Egano, at these words, and feeling the blows, took to his heels, without speaking a word, whilst Anichino was close after him, crying out, "Away, you vile creature! depend upon it, my master shall know all tomorrow."

Egano having sustained all this drubbing, returned at last to his chamber, when the lady said to him, "Well! did Anichino come into the garden?" Egano replied, "Would to God he had stayed away! for, besides all the foul language that could be used to any woman, he has almost broken every bone in my skin. I wondered indeed that he of all men should have addressed you in the way you told me, with intent to dishonour me; but, as he saw you of such a free, cheerful temper, he had a mind, no doubt, to make a trial of you."—"Then, thank Heaven," quoth she, "he proved me with words, and you with deeds. But, I believe, he may say that I bore the words better than you did the deeds: as he has showed himself so faithful, therefore, to you, you will regard him accordingly."—"Most certainly," said Egano: and from that time he concluded he had the most virtuous wife and the honestest servant of any man in the world. On which account (though Anichino and she often laughed together at the thing) they had an opportunity of gratifying their desires with the less suspicion (which could not have been done so well without such a stratagem) all the time Anichino thought fit to stay with Egano at Bologna.

[The incidents of this novel are amusing enough, but it does not appear that there was any necessity for the lovers to have had recourse to such intricate and perilous expedients. This tale has been copied by Ser. Giovanni, in the second and third day of his 'Pecorone,' and has given rise to that part of an old English comedy of the 17th century, called the 'City Night Cap,' by John Davenport, which relates to Francisco's intrigue with Dorothea, the wife of Ludovico. It is the 'Mari cocu, battu et content,' of La Fontaine.]

NOVEL VIII.

A woman who had a very jealous husband, tied a thread to her great toe, by which she informed her lover whether he should come or not. The husband found it out, and whilst he was pursuing the lover, she put her maid in her place. He takes her to be his wife, beats her, cuts off her hair, and then fetches his wife's relations, who find nothing of what he had told them, and load him with reproaches.

BEATRICE seemed to them all to have been strangely spiteful towards her husband; and every one agreed that Anichino's fright and confusion must have been very great, to be held in that manner, whilst she told her husband of his design upon

her. The king seeing that Filomena had done, turned to Neifile, who smiled and said,—A great charge at present rests upon me, to relate something equal to what has been said already; but I shall endeavour to acquit myself as well as I can.

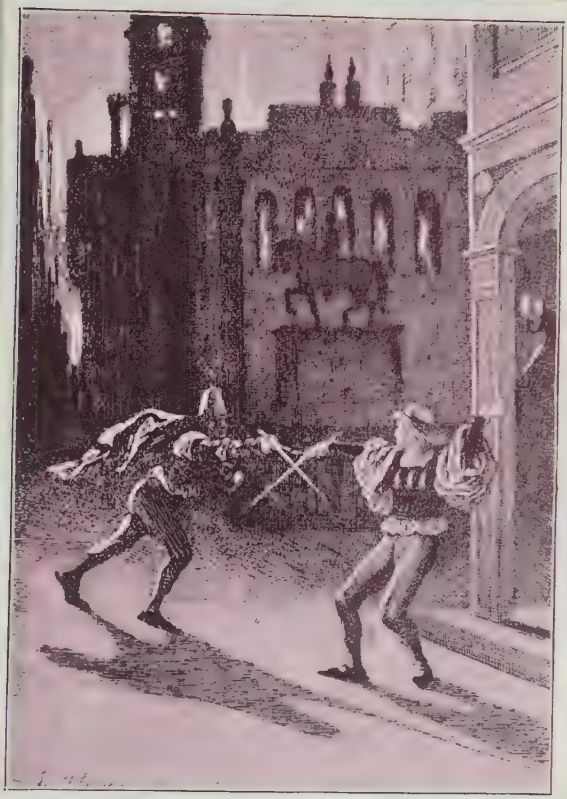
Know, then, that in our city lived a certain rich merchant, named Arriguccio Berlinghieri, who, like many other tradespeople now-a-days, foolishly thought to ennoble himself by marriage; and he took a wife, not at all suitable to himself, whose name was Sismonda. She (her husband, like other persons of business, being often abroad) fell in love with a young gentleman called Ruberto, who had long paid his addresses to her, and being not so discreet in that affair as she ought to have been, it happened, whether her husband had any notion of it, or for what other reason I cannot tell, that he became the most jealous creature in the world, and, laying aside all his other concerns, he applied his mind wholly to watching her; nor would he ever go to sleep without seeing her first in bed. This was the greatest torment to her, as it deprived her of all opportunity of being with her gallant; therefore, after much thinking about it, and being greatly importuned by him all the time, it came into her head at last to take the following method; namely, to have her lover come to the door in the middle of the night, and go and let him in whilst the husband was asleep; for her chamber was towards the street, and she knew that, though her husband was sometimes slow to fall asleep, yet when he was once fast he was not easily roused. And, that she might know when he was there, and nobody else perceive it, she resolved to put a thread out of the window, one end of which should go near to the ground, and the other end was to be brought low along the floor, and so under the clothes into the bed, where she would tie it to her great toe. Having acquainted Ruberto with this, she told him, that, as often as he came, he should pull the thread, when, if her husband was asleep, she would let it go: but, if he was not asleep, she would hold it fast, and then he was not to expect her. Ruberto liked this scheme very well; and he was frequently coming thither, when sometimes he could have her company, and sometimes not.

At last it happened, whilst she was asleep, as the husband was stretching out his feet in the bed, that he met with this thread; when putting down his hand and finding it tied to her toe, he thought within himself there must be some trick

here; perceiving afterwards that the other end went out of the window, he held the fact for certain: accordingly he took it off her toe and put it upon his own, waiting to see what the event would be. He had not been long waiting, before Ruberto came, and pulled the thread as usual: Arriguccio felt it, but not having tied the thread fast enough, and the other drawing pretty hard, it came off, which Ruberto took for a signal that he should stay, and so he did. Arriguccio upon this rose with all haste, and taking arms with him, went to the door, to see who it was, and to inflict vengeance upon him. Now, though he was a merchant, he was a stout, warlike man; and being come to the door, and not opening it in the manner the lady used to do, Ruberto began to have a suspicion how it was, and immediately took to his heels, and the other after him. At last Ruberto having run a great way, the other still pursuing him, he faced about (as he was armed likewise) and drew his sword, and to it they fell, the one continually thrusting, whilst the other stood upon his defence.

The lady awoke the moment her husband opened the chamber-door, and finding the thread gone from her toe, concluded she was discovered. Perceiving that her husband had run after her lover, she rose, resolving what to do; and calling her maid (who was in the secret) she prevailed upon her to go into her bed; begging of her to receive all the blows patiently which her master should give, without making any discovery; and she would make her such a recompense, that she should have no cause to repent. Putting out the light, then, which was in the chamber, she went and hid herself in a corner of the house, waiting for the event. The fray between Arriguccio and Ruberto had alarmed all the neighbours, who rose and began to reprove them very severely: on which Arriguccio, without knowing who his antagonist was, or being able to do him any harm, left him (for fear of being known himself), and returned full of wrath to his own house. And coming into the chamber, "Where is this vile woman?" he said, "What! she has out the candle that I should not find her: but she is mistaken." So he went to the bed-side, and began to beat and kick the maid (thinking it was his wife), till he was quite weary, and what with his hands and feet together, had bruised her face to a mummy. When he had done that, he cut off her hair, saying all the reproachful things that could be spoken to a woman. The girl roared lustily (as indeed she had reason); and though

STRATAGEM OF DAME SISMONDA
SEVENTH DAY ❧ NOVEL VIII



she frequently cried "For God's sake have mercy!" and nothing more, yet her words were so broken with lamentation, and he so crazed too with fury, that he never discovered her not to be his wife. Having beat her then to some purpose, and cut off her hair (as we observed) he said, "Thou vile prostitute, I shall meddle with thee no farther, but will go for thy brothers, to let them know of thy exploits, when they may do as they shall think most for their own credit, and take thee away with them; for here thou shalt no longer abide:" so he locked her in, and went away by himself.

As soon as Sismonda (who had heard the whole transaction) perceived he was gone, she came into the chamber and struck a light, when she found the girl all bruised and in tears. Having comforted her in the best manner she was able, she removed her to her own apartment, where she was well taken care of: and rewarding her at Arriguccio's expense, to her own content, she went immediately and set her room to rights. She made the bed over again, as if nobody had lain in it that night, lighted up the lamp, dressed herself as if she had never been in bed, and then taking up her work, sat herself down at the top of the stairs, and began to sew. Arriguccio in the mean time went with all possible haste to her brother's house, and knocked there till he made them hear and open the door. The three brothers and the mother all rose, hearing who it was; and seeing him come alone, and at that time of night, they inquired the reason. Thereupon he related the whole affair, beginning with the thread, and going on to what he had done afterwards, and, at length, by way of conviction, showed them the hair, which he had cut off; adding, that in regard to their own honour they might take her away and dispose of her as they pleased, for that he would be no longer troubled with her. The brothers were greatly incensed at hearing this story, and in their fury ordered torches to be got ready, preparing to go back with him, that she might not want her due treatment, whilst the mother went heavily after, sometimes entreating one, and sometimes another of them, not to be too hasty in condemning their sister; alleging, that he might have quarrelled with her upon some other account, and now brought this charge by way of excuse; and declaring she could not imagine how it could be, seeing that she well knew her daughter, having brought her up herself, with more words to that effect.

By this time they had reached the house, and were going up stairs, when Sismonda called out to them, "Who is there?" One of her brothers replied, "You shall soon know, you vile creature as you are!"—"Lord have mercy on me!" said she, "what is all this for?" And rising up, she went to meet them, saying, "Brothers, you are welcome; but what is the meaning of your coming all three at this time of the night?" They, observing that she had been sitting at work, and without any such bruises or blows as the husband had talked of, began to wonder; and, abating a little of their former wrath, they inquired the meaning of this difference with her husband, threatening her severely if she spoke anything but the truth. The lady replied, "I know not what you would have me say, nor of any quarrel that I have had with him." Arriguccio, on beholding her, was quite confounded; remembering that he had scratched and beat her in a most outrageous manner, of which no sign now appeared; and her brothers then told her what they had heard from him. She now turned to him, and said, "Alas! my dear, what is this I hear? Why would you have me thought to be a wicked person, to your great disgrace, when I am not so, and yourself an ill-tempered sorry man, when it is quite otherwise? When were you here to-night before now? Or when did you beat me? For my part, I know nothing of the matter." Arriguccio replied, "You abominable wretch! what, did we not go to bed together? Did I not return hither again after pursuing your gallant? Did I not give you a thousand blows at the same time that I cut off your hair?"—"You never went to bed in this house to-night," she made answer, "but, letting this alone, for which you can have only my word, and to come to what you now talk of, namely, your beating me, and cutting off my hair, let any one see if I have such bruises upon me; nor should I advise you to attempt ever to serve me so; for, as I hope to be saved, I would return the like, if you did. And, as to cutting off my hair, I never knew anything of it, if it was so; but let us see whether it be as you say, or not." She then pulled her veil off, and shewed her hair all entire, and in order.

The brothers and the mother seeing this, turned fiercely upon Arriguccio. "How now, sir!" they said. "Surely this can never be the thing that you came to acquaint us with; which way will you prove the rest?" Arriguccio was like one out of his wits. Gladly would he have said something, but seeing the thing appear differently from what he

had undertaken to show them, he could not get out one word. She now said to her brothers, "I see he has a mind I should relate to you his vile proceedings, and my own unhappiness, and I will do it. I believe firmly that what he says may be true, and I'll tell you which way. This sorry fellow, to whom you gave me in an ill hour, who calls himself a merchant truly, and would be thought such, and who therefore should be as temperate as a hermit, and as modest as a maid: this man, I say, is drunk most nights in one tavern or other; one while with one prostitute, and then again with another, whilst I am forced to sit up for him, in the manner you now found me, till midnight for the most part, and very often till morning. And being very drunk, he might find a thread tied to the toe of one of those strumpets, and run after some person or other, and fight him, as he says; and returning back, he might beat her in that manner, and cut off her hair: and not being thoroughly sober again, he imagines it was done to me; if you observe, he appears now to be half fuddled; therefore I would have you consider him as a person in liquor, and forgive him even as I mean to do."

The mother, at these words, made a great clamour, and said, "My dear child, it shall never be; he deserves hanging, for an ill-conditioned brute as he is. He is unworthy of such a woman as you are. What could he have done more, had he catched you in the open street? Things are come to a fine pass truly, if you must be set down by the words of a little paltry merchant. This sort of fellows, you must know, if they have but little money in their pockets, are all for a gentleman's daughter; when they pretend to some coat-of-arms, and say, 'I am of such a family, and my ancestors did so and so.' Would to heaven my sons had followed my advice! Count Guido would gladly have taken you without a penny of fortune; yet they chose to marry you to this jewel here; and though there is not a better gentlewoman, nor one more virtuous in all Florence, yet he was not ashamed to call you strumpet, as if we were strangers to your character. But, as I hope to live, were they ruled by me, they would beat him to a mummy." Turning now to her sons, she said, "I told you, as we came along, that it could never be true. You hear how this fine brother of yours uses your sister: a poor sorry fellow as he is! were I in your place, hearing what he has both said and done towards her, I would never leave him with life. Confound him! for a drunken, quarrelsome

villain, to have no shame in him!" The brothers followed up this harangue with all the severe things they could think of; concluding, at last, with saying, "We forgive you this once, as you were drunk, but take care we hear no more such stories: if we do, we will pay off all your old scores," and so they left him. Arriguccio stood like one who had lost his senses; scarcely knowing whether all this was real, or only a dream, and from that time quarrelled no more with his wife; whilst she not only escaped from the most imminent danger, but opened a way to obtain her desires, without the least fear of her husband for the time to come.

[The Fabliau of 'Les Cheveux Coupés' (Le Grand, ii, 280), is perhaps the immediate original of Boccaccio's story; but the incidents may be traced back to the tales of Bidpai, the oldest collection in the world. In one part of the fable of the 'Dervise and Robbers,' at least as it appears in the version of Gallaud, a shoemaker's wife being detected in an intrigue, and tied to a pillar, persuades another woman to take her place. The husband rises during the night, and cuts off the nose of the substitute. After this catastrophe, the wife instantly resumes her position, and addresses a prayer to God to manifest her innocence by curing her of the wound. The fortieth story of the second part of Malespini is a similar tale to that of Bidpai; it also recurs in the 'Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles;' and one or other of these imitations probably suggested the incident in Massinger's 'Guardian,' of Severino cutting off Calipso's nose, mistaking her in the dark for his wife Iolante.]

NOVEL IX.

Lydia, the wife of Nicostratus, being in love with Pyrrhus, did three things which he had enjoined her, to convince him of her affection. She afterwards used some familiarities with him before her husband's face, making him believe that what he had seen was not real.

NEIFILE's novel had pleased them all to that degree, that they could not keep from laughing and talking about it, although the king had several times called out silence, in order that Pamfilo should speak; who at length began in this manner:—There is nothing, I am persuaded, so dangerous and difficult, that a person who is thoroughly in love will not attempt; and this, though it has been shown by various instances already given, yet I think will be still more apparent from a story which I am going to tell you of a lady much more fortunate than discreet. Therefore I would advise no

one to run the risk of following her course; because neither is fortune always disposed, nor are all men to be blinded, in the same manner.

In Argos, an ancient city of Achaia, more famous formerly for its kings than great, lived a certain nobleman called Nicostratus, to whom fortune, in the decline of his life, had given a young lady for his wife, of as great spirit as she was beautiful, named Lydia. Now he, being a lord of large estate, kept a great number of slaves, dogs, and hawks, and was very fond of country diversions. Amongst his other servants, was a genteel young man named Pyrrhus, whom he valued and trusted above all the rest. With this person Lydia was so much in love, that she could never be happy but in his company; whilst he (whether he did not, or would not, perceive her regard for him) seemed not at all affected by it. This she laid much to heart, and, resolving to make him understand her, she called one of her favourite maids, whose name was Lusca, and said to her, "Lusca, the favours you have received from me should make you both obedient and faithful; take care, therefore, that you reveal what I am going to speak to no one, save to the person concerned. You see what a great disproportion there is between my husband's age and mine, and may suppose I can have but little comfort with such a one; for that reason I have made choice of our Pyrrhus. If you have any regard for me, then, let him know my love for him in the best manner you are able; and entreat him, on my part, that he would please to come hither to me." The girl promised to do so; and on the very first opportunity, she took Pyrrhus aside, and delivered her message. This surprised him very much, for he never had the least notion of such a thing; and being apprehensive that it might be done to try him, he answered roughly, "Lusca, I can never think this comes from my lady; take care, therefore, what you say: or, if she did say so, you could never have her orders to disclose it; or, even admitting that, still I have that regard for my lord, that I could never offer to do him such an injury: I charge you, then, let me hear no more about it." Lusca, not at all abashed at his stern way of speaking, replied, "Pyrrhus, I shall speak at all times what I am ordered by my lady to say, whether it offends you or not; but, as for you, you are no better than a brute."

She returned full of wrath to her mistress, who was like to die on hearing her report. In a few days, she said again, "You know, Lusca, that one stroke never fells an oak:

then go once more, and tell Pyrrhus that his fidelity is at my expense, and represent the passion I have for him in such a manner that he may be affected with it; for if he continues so indifferent, it will go near to cost me my life." The girl desired her to take courage; and going again to Pyrrhus, and finding him in a good humour, she said, "I told you, a few days since, of the great regard my lady had for you; and I now assure you, that, if you continue in the same resolution, she will never survive it: then be persuaded, or I shall think you the greatest fool in the world. What an honour it will be to have the love of such a lady. Consider how greatly you are obliged to fortune: she offers you a most beautiful woman, and a refuge from your necessities. Who will be happier than yourself, if you be wise? Do but represent to yourself whatever an ambitious heart can desire; all will be yours. Open then your understanding to my words, and remember, that fortune is wont to come once in our lives to us with cheerful looks, and her lap full of favours: if we turn our backs on her at that time, we may thank ourselves should we be poor and miserable all the rest of our days. You talk of honour and fidelity; there is something indeed in that plea among friends: but, with regard to slaves, in such a case, they may do just as their masters would behave to them. Can you imagine, had you a wife, daughter, or sister, that our master fancied, that he would stand on such nice terms of duty, and all that, as you now do to his wife? You can never be so foolish, but you must believe that, if persuasion was ineffectual, he would use force. Let us serve him, therefore, as he would serve us; take advantage of fortune's kind offer in your favour; for, depend upon it, setting aside the consideration of what may happen through your refusal to the lady, if you do not, you will repent the longest day you have to live."

Pyrrhus, who had made several reflections on what she had said before to him, and had resolved to make a different reply if ever she came again, being now not averse to the thing, provided he could be assured she was in earnest, made answer, "Lusca, that is all true, I confess; but yet, as my lord is a very wise and provident person, and, as I am intrusted with the management of all his affairs, I am afraid that my lady only does this to try me: three things then there are that I require of her for my own conviction, after which I will obey all her commands. The first is, that she kill my lord's favorite hawk before his face; the second, that

she send me a lock of his beard; and the third, one of his soundest and best teeth." These seemed very hard conditions to the maid, and more so to the mistress; but love, who is a good comforter as well as counsellor, soon made her resolve. Accordingly, she sent him word, by the same person, that all three should be done. And farther, that, as he had such an opinion of his lord's wisdom, she would also undertake to make him not believe his own eyes.

Pyrrhus then waited to see what course she meant to take. In a few days, therefore, Nicostratus having made a great entertainment, as he used frequently to do, just as the first service was taken away, she came into the hall, richly dressed, and there, in the presence of Pyrrhus and the whole company, went to the perch where this hawk was, and loosed him, as if she had a mind to take him upon her hand, when, taking him by the jesses, she dashed his brains out against the wall. And while Nicostratus was crying out, "Alas! my dear, what have you done?" she took no notice, but turned to the company, and said, "I should scarcely revenge myself on a king that was to do me an injury, if I wanted courage to wreak my vengeance on a paltry hawk. You must know, that this bird has deprived me of all the pleasure I should have from my husband; for, by break of day he is up, and on horseback, after his favourite diversion, whilst I am left all alone, and neglected: for which reason, I have long taken a resolution to do this thing, and only waited for an opportunity to have so many equitable judges present, as I take you to be." The gentlemen, supposing her affection to Nicostratus to be as fervent as her words seemed to declare, laughed heartily; and, turning to Nicostratus, who seemed a good deal disturbed, they said, "She has done very well in taking her revenge upon the hawk;" and, after a little raillery, they changed his resentment into a fit of laughter. Pyrrhus, upon seeing this, said to himself, "She has made a noble beginning; heaven grant that she may persevere!"

The hawk being thus despatched, it was not long before she happened to be toying with her husband in the chamber, whilst he, pulling her gently by the hair, gave occasion for her to put Pyrrhus's second command in execution: so, taking hold of a little lock of his beard, and laughing heartily at the same time, she pulled so hard, that she brought the skin and all away together. He grew very peevish at this, and was going to quarrel with her; when she said,

"You make an angry face, truly, because I plucked a hair or two off your beard; you were not sensible what I suffered, when you pulled me by the hair just now." So, continuing their play from one word to another, she took care of the tuft of his beard, and sent it that very day to her lover.

She was more perplexed about the last thing; but having an enterprising genius, which was rendered more so by love, she soon resolved on what means to use to bring that about. Nicostratus had two youths in his house, given him by their fathers, who were gentlemen, in order to learn good breeding, one of whom carved his victuals, whilst the other filled out the wine. Now she told both the youths one day, that their breath was very offensive, and she instructed them, when they waited upon Nicostratus, to turn their heads on one side always, but never to speak of it to any person. They believed what she had told them, and did as they were directed. After this she said one day to her husband, "Did you ever take notice of your pages' behaviour when they wait upon you?"—"Yes," said he, "I have, and have been often going to ask them the reason."—"Then," she replied, "you may spare yourself that trouble, for I can tell you. I have kept it some time from you, for fear of annoying you; but as I see other people take notice of it, I can conceal it no longer. It is then because you have a very foul breath; I know not what the cause may be, for it did not use to be so; but it is a most grievous thing, as you keep a great deal of company: therefore, I would have you take some method or other to get rid of it."—"What," said Nicostratus, "can it be owing to? Have I a bad tooth in my head?" "Perhaps you have," she replied; and taking him to the window, she made him open his mouth, and after looking carefully in every part, she said, "Oh, my dear! How could you bear with it so long? Here is a tooth which seems not only rotten, but entirely consumed, and, if you keep it any longer in your mouth, it will certainly decay all the rest on the same side: I advise you then to have it out before it goes any farther."—"As you think so," quoth he, "send instantly for an operator, to draw it out."—"Tell me of no operator," said she; "I will never agree to that; it seems to stand in such a manner, that I think I could do it myself: besides, those fellows are so very barbarous upon such occasions, that my heart could never bear to have you under their hands. Therefore, I will try to do it myself; and, if it gives you too much pain, I will

let you go again, which those people never will do." Getting now an instrument for that purpose, and sending every one out of the room, excepting her favourite maid, she seated him upon a stool, and laying hold of a tooth, whilst the other kept him fast down, she put him to most intolerable pain, and at length drew it out by main force; then keeping the tooth, and producing a rotten one, which she had ready in her hand, she said to the poor man, who was almost dead, "See here, what it was you had in your mouth." He believing her, and though he had felt the most exquisite torture, and complained much of her harsh way of doing it, yet now it was out, he thought himself cured; and having taken some good comfortable things, the pain abated, and he went out of the chamber. The tooth she immediately sent to her lover, who being now convinced of her love, held himself in readiness to obey her commands.

She had a mind, however, to give him some further assurance, and though thinking every hour an age till she could be with him, she feigned to be very ill; and her husband coming one day after dinner to see her, and nobody with him but Pyrrhus, she desired, that, by way of ease to her malady, they would take her into the garden. Accordingly Nicostratus took hold of one arm, and Pyrrhus, of the other, and leading her thither, laid her on a grass plot, under a pear-tree. Nicostratus then sat down by her, and she, who had before instructed Pyrrhus what to do, said to him, "I have a great desire to have some of those pears; climb up into the tree, and get me a few." Pyrrhus immediately went up, and, as he was throwing down some of the pears, he began to call out, "Hallo, master! What are you doing? And you, madam, are you not ashamed to suffer it in my presence? Do you think I am blind? You seem to me to have soon recovered from your fit of sickness. If you want to do the like, surely you have plenty of fine rooms that might serve the turn more decently." The lady turned to her husband, and said, "What is Pyrrhus talking of? He is in a dream, surely."—"No, madam," quoth he, "I am in no dream. What! did you think I could not see you?" Nicostratus wondered, and said, "Surely, Pyrrhus, you are raving."—"No, sir," he replied, "I am very confident I saw you so and so together." "What can be the meaning of this?" quoth the lady, "can it be possible that he appeared to himself to see what he says? Were I well enough I would actually go into the tree myself, to behold the strange things

that he talks of seeing thence." Pyrrhus still continuing in the same story, Nicostratus desired him to come down, and asked him what it was he really saw? Pyrrhus replied, "I saw you tumbling my lady on the grass, saving your favour; and then I saw you get up from her and place yourself where you are." "The man is out of his wits," quoth Nicostratus; "we neither of us so much as stirred from the place where we are sitting."—"What is the use of arguing," said Pyrrhus, "I tell you I saw it."

Nicostratus was now more and more surprised, and said, "I will see whether this tree be enchanted or not:" and as he was mounting up into the tree, Pyrrhus and the lady became very loving. Nicostratus seeing this, began to roar out, "Oh! thou vile woman! what art thou doing there? and that rascal Pyrrhus, in whom I put all my confidence!" And, with these words, he made all possible haste down, when the lady and Pyrrhus both said, "We were sitting here all the time just as you left us."—However, he seemed to be in a violent passion, whilst Pyrrhus said to him, "Now, sir, I am convinced that I saw falsely myself, as yours is the same case; for I can be positive that you were mistaken. Do but reason with yourself: can it be supposed that your lady, who is the most virtuous and prudent of all her sex, should ever attempt to do such a thing before your very face? And for my own part, I would be cut limb from limb before I would ever entertain such a thought, much less do so in your presence. The fault, then, in this mistaken appearance must proceed from the tree; for all the world could never have convinced me, but that I saw you and my lady together in the same manner, if I had not heard from yourself that we appeared so to you." On this, she said, with a good deal of warmth, "Do you think, were I so loosely given, that I should be such a fool as to do these things before your eyes? No, there are opportunities enough, without your ever being the wiser."

Nicostratus, believing at last what they both had said, came into a little better temper, and began to talk of the novelty, and wonder at the thing; whilst the lady, who seemed concerned for the ill opinion he had received concerning her, added, "Most certainly, this tree shall never occasion any more scandal either to me or any other woman, if I can help it: run, therefore, Pyrrhus, for an axe, and cut it down, in regard to us both; though the axe might be as well employed upon my husband's weak noddle, for believing his own eyes

in a case so repugnant both to common sense and reason." The axe was then brought, and the tree cut down; upon which she said to Nicostratus, "My wrath is over, now I see my honour's adversary thus demolished." And he having begged her pardon, she freely forgave him, charging him, for the future, never to presume such a thing of her, who loved him dearer than her own life.—So the poor deluded husband returned with his wife and Pyrrhus into the house, where nothing now prevented the latter from accomplishing all their wishes.

[All that relates to the pear-tree in this tale, corresponds precisely with the fourth lesson in chapter 12 of the collection known by the name of 'Bahar Danush, or Garden of Knowledge' (Scott's translation, vol. ii). It is true that 'Bahar Danush' was not written till long after the age of Boccaccio, but the author of 'Inatulla' professes to have borrowed it from the traditions of the Brahmins, from whom it may have been translated into the languages of Persia or Arabia, and imported from these regions to Europe by some crusader, like other Asiatic romances which have served as the groundwork of so many of our stories and poems. "Indeed," says Dunlop, "I have been informed by an eminent oriental scholar that the above story of the 'Bahar Danush' exists in a Hindu work, which he believes prior to the age of Boccaccio." The fact of the tale in the 'Decameron' which relates to the stratagem by which the lady obtains a tooth from her husband, seems to have been suggested by the 'Conte Devot d'un Roi qui voulut faire bruler le fils de son Seneschal,' or the sixty-eighth story of the 'Cento Novelle Antiche,' which is copied from the French tale. The incidents concerning the pear-tree form the second story in La Fontaine's 'La Gageure des trois Commères.' They have also some resemblance to the 'Merchant's Tale,' in Chaucer, and, by consequence to Pope's 'January and May.']

NOVEL X.

Two inhabitants of Siena love the same woman, one of whom was godfather to her son. This man dies, and returns, according to his promise, to his friend, and gives him an account of what is done in the other world.

THERE was only the king now left to speak; who, after quieting the ladies, who were under some concern for the cutting down of the pear-tree, began as follows:—It is a plain case, that every just prince ought himself to be tied

down by the laws of his own making; and that if he acts otherwise, he should be punished as a private person: now I am forced to fall under this very censure; for, yesterday, I gave you a subject for this day's discourse, with no design of making use of my privilege, but to conform with the rest and speak to it myself. Whereas, besides having the very story taken from me which I meant to have given, there has been such a variety of incidents told, and well told, to the same effect, that I can think of nothing myself worth troubling you with, after them. Therefore, as I am under the necessity of transgressing against my own law, I submit to any punishment you shall please to inflict upon me. So, having recourse to my privilege at last, I shall relate a short novel; which, though it contains some things which are not to be credited, may not be disagreeable for you to hear.

There were, some time since, two young men of Siena, the one named Tingoccio Mini, and the other Meuccio di Tura, who dwelt in the Porta Solaia, and were very intimate. They used, therefore, to go to church together, when, hearing much of the pleasures and pains of a future state, and being desirous of knowing something more certain on that head, they promised each other, that whichever died first should return, if it were possible, to inform his friend. In the mean time, they happened both to fall in love with the lady of Ambruogio Anselmini. Great as their friendship was, they kept this from each other, though for different reasons. Tingoccio had been godfather to one of the lady's children; and being in a measure ashamed of such gallantry, he concealed it from his friend. On the other hand, Meuccio kept his love a secret, because he knew the other liked her as well as himself. At length Tingoccio, as he had more opportunities than his friend, happened to succeed. This was a great mortification to Meuccio, who still lived in hopes of gaining his point some time or other, and affected, therefore, to know nothing of the matter, lest Tingoccio should thwart his designs.

Some time after this, Tingoccio was taken ill, and died: and the third night afterwards, he came into Meuccio's chamber, when he was fast asleep, and called aloud to him. —Meuccio awoke, and said, "What art thou?" He replied, "I am thy friend Tingoccio, who am come, according to our agreement, to bring thee tidings of the other world." Meuccio was a good deal frightened at this, but taking courage at last, he said, "Thou art welcome." And then he asked him

whether he was a lost person? Tingoccio made answer, "Those things only are lost which cannot be found; and if that was the case, how should I be here?"—"I mean not so," quoth Meuccio; "but what I ask is, whether you be one of the damned?"—"Not so," said he; "but yet I suffer great pains for some sins which I committed." He then inquired what punishment was inflicted for every single sin, and Tingoccio resolved him fully in each particular. Meuccio asked then if he could do him any service here, and Tingoccio answered, "Yes; namely, by saying prayers and masses, and giving alms: for those things are of great benefit to the deceased." This Meuccio promised to do; and as the ghost was offering to depart, he raised himself up, and said, "I remember, my friend, that you had an affair with your godson's mother: pray what is done to you upon that account?" "O, brother," he replied, "when I first arrived in the other world, I met with a ghost who seemed to have all my sins by heart, and who ordered me to go into a certain place, where I was to do penance for them, and where I found a great many people who were sent thither upon the same score. And being among them, and calling to mind that particular crime you now mention, for which I expected some very great punishment, I was all over in a tremble, although in the midst of a great fire. When one that stood by me said, 'Pray, what hast thou done more than any one else, that thou quakest to this degree in so hot a place?'—'Alas!' I replied, 'I had to do with my godson's mother.'—'Go, thou fool,' said he, 'is there any relationship in that, to make the crime worse?' This gave me some comfort." And now, it being near daybreak, he said to his friend, "Farewell, for I can stay no longer with you;" and so vanished out of the room. Thus Meuccio was convinced, that that sort of kindred was of no consequence; and thenceforth he was less scrupulous than he used to be in such cases.

The west wind began now to breathe, as the sun grew near his setting; when the king, having concluded his novel, arose, and taking the crown from his own head, placed it upon Lauretta's, saying, "Madam, I crown you with your own crown, as queen of this company; do you, as such, command what you think will be most agreeable to us all." Lauretta, being now queen, sent to the master of the household, and ordered him to have the cloth laid in the pleasant valley sooner than usual, that they might return afterwards with

more ease to the palace. Then directing what she would farther have done, she turned to the company, and said, "It was Dioneo's will, yesterday, that our novels should be concerning the devices and tricks which women put upon their husbands; and was it not that you would think I had malice in my heart, my subject for to-morrow should be the manner of men's imposing upon their wives. But, setting this aside, let every one think of the stratagems which are daily practised by women against the men, or by the men against the women; or, lastly, by one man against another; and this, I think, will afford as agreeable matter for discourse as what we have had to-day." Then she gave them their liberty till supper-time. The company then arose, and whilst some went to wash their feet in the cool stream, others took a walk upon the green turf, under the cover of the spreading trees, and Dioneo and Fiammetta sat singing together the song of Palamon and Arcite. Thus all were agreeably employed till supper; when the tables being set forth by the side of the basin, they sat down to the music of a thousand birds, and their faces fanned all the time with cool refreshing breezes, coming from the little hills around them, they supped with the utmost mirth and satisfaction. Taking a walk afterwards round the valley, before the sun was quite set, they began their march back to the palace, talking all the way of a thousand different things, which had either occurred in this day's discourse, or the preceding, and arrived there as it grew dark. Refreshing themselves, after their walk, with wine and sweetmeats, they indulged in a dance by the side of the fountain; sometimes, for variety, to the sound of Tindaro's bagpipes, and sometimes to other more musical instruments. At length they called upon Filomena for a song, who thus obeyed:

SONG.

Such my desire to meet my love,
That I with eager transport fly:
But why your long unkind delay?
Tell me, my swain, O tell me why?

The joys I from your converse feel
No pow'r of language can express;
Whilst your commanding smiles and voice
Conspire with mutual aid to bless.

Say, then, my life! when shall I meet,
And former vows of love renew?
Soon come the time, be long your stay;
For all my wishes point to you;

I'll hold you fast, when fortune thus
Auspicious crowns my fond desires;
Then haste, fly quick to my embrace;
That pleasing hope my song inspires.

This song made them all conclude that Filomena was subject to the little god; and, by her manner of expressing herself, her passion seemed to be in a fair and prosperous way: but when it was ended, the queen, remembering that the next day was a fast, said, "Gentlemen and ladies, I must let you know, that to-morrow being Friday, it is to be observed as holy; for you may remember, that when Neifile was queen, we waved our diversions on that day, and so we did on Saturday. Therefore I think it proper to follow so laudable an example, and to dedicate those two days to our devotions." This was agreeable to the whole company; and a good part of the night being now spent, she dismissed them, and they retired to their respective chambers.

THE EIGHTH DAY.

The rays of the rising sun began now to gild the tops of the highest mountains, and the shade of the night was withdrawn from the earth, when the queen, and all her company arose on Sunday morning; and, after taking a pleasant walk along the meadows, they went about the third hour to a neighbouring chapel, where they heard divine service. Returning to the house, and dining cheerfully, they afterwards began to sing and dance as usual: when leave was given to such as wished to repose themselves. After the sun had passed the meridian, they all met again by the fountain-side; and being seated, Neifile, by the queen's command, thus began:

NOVEL I.

Gulfardo borrows a sum of money of Guasparruolo, in order to give it his wife for granting him a favour; he afterwards tells Guasparruolo, in her presence, that he had paid it to her, which she acknowledges to be true.

SEEING it is my fortune to begin to-day with a novel, I am content to obey: and, as we have heard much of the women overreaching the men, I have a mind to tell you of a man's being too cunning for a woman: not that I mean to blame him for it, or to say that she was not rightly served. No, I rather commend him, and think she met with no more than her due. I do it also to show that the men know how to deceive us on occasion, as well as we do to impose upon them: though, to speak more properly, this cannot be called deceiving, so much as making a deserved return; for a woman ought to be virtuous and chaste, and to hold her honour as dear as her life: and though our frailty is such, that we cannot always be upon our guard, yet I think that woman ought to be burned who makes a trade of love. But where the little god takes the field, whose force you know is very great, some grains of allowance should be made, as was shown a few days since by Filostrato, in the story of Madam Philippa di Prato.

There lived at Milan, a soldier, who was a German, and his name was Gulfardo; one of a good person, and very trusty to such as retained him in their service, as the Germans generally are; and, because he was always very punctual in his payments, he found a great many merchants ready at any time to lend him any sum, for a very small profit. Now he had placed his affections on a lady, called Ambruogia, wife to a certain rich merchant, named Guasparruolo, who was his old friend and acquaintance. Conducting this affair with such caution, that neither the husband nor any one else had the least suspicion about it, he took an opportunity one day of declaring his mind to her, when she promised to comply upon two conditions; first, that it should be kept secret; and, secondly, as she had occasion for two hundred florins of gold, that he should supply her with that sum. Gulfardo was so provoked at this sordidness, that his love was changed into rage and contempt; and he resolved, therefore, to put a trick upon her. Accordingly, he let her know that he was ready at all times to do that or anything else

which she desired, and that she should send him word when she would have him wait upon her with the money, promising to bring only one friend, in whom he put entire confidence, and who was his companion upon all occasions. She was content, and gave him to understand that her husband was to set out in a few days for Genoa; and that, as soon as he was gone, she would take care to send for him.

In the mean time, Gulfardo went to Guasparruolo, and said, "Sir, I have an affair of consequence upon my hands, which requires me to raise two hundred florins of gold; if you will advance that sum, I will allow you the utmost gratuity." Guasparruolo readily agreed to it, and told him out the money. In a few days after he set out for Genoa, as foretold by the lady, who immediately sent word for Gulfardo to come, and bring the two hundred florins. Obedient to the command, he took his friend along with him, and went to her house; when the first thing he did was to give her the money before this person, saying, "Madam, you will keep this, and give it to your husband when he returns." Never guessing why he spoke to her in that manner, but supposing it was because he would have his friend know nothing of the matter, she replied, "I will do so; but first let me see what money there is." So she turned it out upon the table, and found there were just two hundred florins; then, locking it up with a secret satisfaction, she came and showed him into the chamber. And he continued his visits to her during her husband's absence at Genoa.

On Guasparruolo's return, Gulfardo went again to his house, having previously ascertained that his wife was with him, and said, in her hearing, "Sir, the money you were so kind as to lend me was of no service, because I could not compass the thing on account of which I borrowed it: therefore, I brought it back immediately to your wife. Please, then, to cancel my account." Guasparruolo turned to her, and inquired whether she had received the money? She, seeing the witness present, and not knowing how to deny it, said, "Yes, I received it, and forgot to tell you."—"Then," he replied, "I am satisfied: farewell, your account is clear." Gulfardo withdrew, well pleased, leaving the lady full of indignation, defeated and despised.

[This is Chaucer's 'Shipmanne's Tale, or Story of Don John;' and La Fontaine's 'A Femme avare Galant escroc.' Gulfardo's stratagem is attributed to Captain Philip Stafford, in Johnson's 'Lives of Pirates and

Highwaymen.' Indeed, that work is full of tricks recorded by Boccaccio, Gabadino, and Sacchetti; which shows that it is a mere invention, unless Johnson's worthies resorted to the Italian novelists for instruction.]

NOVEL II.

The parson of Varlungo receives favours from a woman of his parish, and leaves his cloak in pawn. He afterwards borrows a mortar of her, which he returns, and demands his cloak, which he says he left only as a token. She mutinies, but is forced by her husband to send it.

THEY all thought that Gulfardo had served the sordid Milanese lady very justly, when the queen turned with a smile towards Pamfilo, and desired him to follow:—I mean, said he, to relate a short story, touching those people who are continually doing us injuries, without our being able to come at them, in the same manner at least as we are affected; I mean the priests, who set up a general crusade against our wives, thinking when once they bring any of them under their subjection, that they have done as meritorious an action as if they led the sultan captive from Alexandria to Avignon. Now we of the laity cannot return the like to them, though we should do well to revenge what is so done to our wives, with as good a will, upon their mothers, sisters, and other relations. I will tell you, therefore, of a country amour, more diverting, in the conclusion especially, than long, by which you may reap the benefit of learning that priests are not to be believed in all things.

At Varlungo, a village not far from this place, lived a young healthful priest, who, though not very expert at reading, yet was he used to hold forth under an elm-tree every Sunday, regaling the people there with many good and holy discourses. And as to the women, no priest ever gave them better attendance; for he was daily carrying them presents of cake, holy-water, and candle ends, when he would also give them his blessing. Amongst all his parishioners, none pleased him so well as a good woman, called Belcolore, wife to a certain husbandman, whose name was Bentivegna del Mazzo: she in truth, was a tight, handsome brunette, and could sing, and play upon the virginals, or lead up a dance as well as any lass in the country; so that our priest was out of his wits about her. All day long would he go poking about to get a sight of her, and on Sunday, when she was at prayers, he would quaver out his Kyries and his

Sanctuses, like a jackass braying, to let her see that he was a master of music; but if she happened not to be there, he made no such stir; and yet he managed so, that neither the husband nor any of the neighbours suspected him. The better to gain her favour, he was every now and then sending her presents: one day a bunch of leeks, the finest in the country, out of his own garden, planted by his own hands; another time a basket of peas, and onions or scallions, as the season served. And, when he saw an opportunity, he would give her a look out of the corner of his eye, whilst she would generally pass on, making believe that she never noticed his ogling; so that, hitherto, it was all labour lost.

Now one day it happened, as the priest was dawdling about, that he met the husband, driving a loaded ass before him, when he accosted him, and asked whither he was going? "Why truly, father," he replied, "I am going about some business to the city, and I carry these things as a present to one Signor Bonaccori da Ginestreto, for him to enter an appearance for me, and to stand my friend in a cause that I have before the judge." The priest seemed pleased, and said, "Son, you are in the right: go, you have my blessing, and make haste home; and if you should see Lapuccio or Naldino, do not forget to tell them to bring home my leathern straps." The honest man promised to deliver his message, and so went on towards Florence, whilst the priest thought this a fit opportunity to go to Belcolore, and try his luck with her. Accordingly, he made no stop till he came to the house, and stepping in, he called out, "God bless all here; who is within?" Belcolore was gone up stairs, and when she heard him she said, "You are welcome, sir; but what are you doing abroad in the very heat of the day?" The priest replied, "I am come to spend a little time with you, finding that your husband has gone into the city." She then came and sat down, and began to pick some coleseed, which her husband had just been threshing, when he said, "Ah, Belcolore! must I always die for you in this manner?" She laughed and replied, "Pray, what have I done to you?"—"Nothing to me; but you will not let me do what I should like to you."—"Oh, go along with you! do priests do such things?"—"Why not, as well as other people?"—"Well, but what will you give me? for I know you are all as stingy as the devil."—"Why, ask what you will; a pair of shoes, or a top-knot, or a girdle, or anything else that you like."—"Father, I want none of these things; but, if you

love me as you say, do one thing for me, and I will consent."—"Say what it is, and be assured that I will do it most willingly."—"On Saturday, then," she said, "I must go to Florence to carry some yarn home, which I have spun, and to get my wheel mended; and if you will lend me five pounds, which I know you have, I can redeem from the broker my best gown and petticoat, which I have been forced to pawn, and for want of which I am not able to appear upon any saint's day, and you will then find me always ready to oblige you."—"As I hope for a good harvest," quoth the priest, "I have not so much about me, but I will take care you shall have it before that time."—"I know you all," she replied, "to be good promisers, and that you never think of performing what you say. No, I will make no such bargains. If you have not the money in your pocket, go and fetch it."—"Alas!" quoth the priest, "never send me home at this time; you see there is nobody here now; perhaps, when I return there may; so that we can never have a better opportunity."—"Very well," said she, "you know my resolution, either bring the money, or else go about your business."

The priest perceiving that her intention was not to comply without a *salvum me fac*, whereas he was for having it *sine custodia*, said, "Well, if you will not take my word, see I leave you this cloak as a pledge."—"Your cloak!" she said, looking up; "pray what is it worth?"—"Worth!" answered the priest; "I would have you to know that it is made of a fine serge; nay, there are some of our people that call it a broad cloth; I bought it fifteen days ago only, of Lotto, the fripperer, and it cost me seven pounds; and Buglietto tells me, whom you will allow to be a judge, that I got five shillings at least by the bargain."—"Ay! did it stand you in so much?" said she; "I could never have thought it; but give it me first." He did so, and when she had locked it up, she turned to him, and said, "Let us go into the barn, no one ever comes there." So said, so done, and master Parson got what he had bargained for. After this he had to go home in his cassock, as if he had been celebrating a wedding, when he began to repent of what he had done; and, considering with himself that all his vails and offerings for the whole year would not amount to five pounds, he fell to contriving how to get his cloak back for nothing, and at last his cunning supplied him with the following stratagem.

The next day being holiday, he sent a boy to Belcolore, desiring her to lend him her stone mortar, as he had two neighbours to dine with him, and he intended to make them some green sauce. She sent it, and, about dinner-time, when he expected that she and her husband would be seated together, he called his clerk, and said, "Go, take this mortar to Belcolore, and tell her, that your master gives her many thanks, and desires she would send the cloak which the boy left by way of token." The clerk took the mortar, found the husband and wife just finishing their dinner, and delivered his message. When he asked for the cloak, she was going to make a reply; but the husband put on an angry look, and said, "How came you to take any token from our priest? I have a good mind to box your ears for doing so. Return it, I say, directly, and let him want what he will of ours, I charge you never to say him nay." Upon this she went grumbling to the press for the cloak, and giving it to the clerk, she said, "Tell your master, the priest, that so help me God, he shall mix no more sauce in my mortar." The clerk delivered it with those very words, upon which the priest laughed, and said, "When you see her, you may tell her, if she will not lend me her mortar, I will not lend her my pestle, and so we are even." Now the husband imagined that she had spoken in that manner, because he had just been quarreling with her, for which reason he was under no concern about it. But she continued so provoked, that she would never speak to the priest from that time till the season of the vintage, when, after she had long threatened to send him to the devil, he found means to pacify her at last, with some new wine and chestnuts, and instead of the five pounds, he tuned her virginals for her, and made her a song, which so contented her, that they became as good friends as ever.

[This tale was probably suggested to Boccaccio by the first part of the Fabliau "Du Pretre et de la Dame,' though the imitation is not nearly so close as in most of the other tales in which our author has followed the Trouvers. In the Fabliau, a priest, while on an amatory visit to the wife of a burgess, is nearly surprised by the unsuspected coming of the husband. His mistress has just time to conceal him in a great basket, which stood in an adjacent apartment; but in the hurry he left his cloak behind him. He had not long remained in the basket before it occurred to him that it might be applied to better purposes than concealment; taking it

in his arms, he returned boldly to the room where the burgess was sitting with his wife, and requested, as he had now brought back the basket, of which he had the loan, that the cloak which he had left in pawn should be restored to him. (Fabliaux par Brabazan et Méon, iv. 181.)[1]

NOVEL III.

Calandrino, Bruno, and Buffalmacco go to Mugnone, to look for the Heliotrope; and Calandrino returns laden with stones, supposing that he has found it. Upon this his wife scolds him, and he beats her for it; and then tells his companions what they knew better than himself.

THE ladies laughed immoderately at Pamfilo's novel, when the queen turned to Eliza, who began in this manner:—I do not know whether I shall be able to divert you as much with my short novel, though it be true as well as comical; but yet I will try.

In our city, abounding always with people of different tempers and nations, there dwelt, not long since, a painter, called Calandrino, a simple sort of man, and a great original. He was almost always in company with two of the same profession, the one named Bruno, and the other Buffalmacco, both facetious and merry persons, but shrewd and wary enough; and they liked to be with this man on account of his oddities. There lived also in the same city, a young man, called Maso del Saggio, one of the cleverest wags in the world, who, hearing much of Calandrino's simplicity, longed to divert himself at his expense, by some monstrous hoax. Finding him by chance one day in St. John's church, and observing him very intent on examining the carved work and painting of the Tabernacle, which was just put over the high altar, he thought he had now such an opportunity as he wanted. Acquainting one of his friends with his intentions, they came near to the place where Calandrino was sitting by himself, and pretending not to see him, began to converse together upon the virtues of different stones, whereof Maso discoursed as weightily as though he had been a professed lapidary. Calandrino soon began to listen, and finding that their conversation was not of a private nature, he got up and joined them. This was what they wanted; and as he was going on with his discourse, Calandrino asked him where these stones were to be found? Maso replied, "The greatest part are to be met with in Berlinzone, a city of the Baschi, in a canton called Bengodi, where they tie the vines with

sausages, and you may buy a goose for a penny, and have a gosling into the bargain. There is also a mountain there of grated Parmesan cheese, and people upon it who do nothing else but make cheese-cakes and mackaroons, which they boil in capon-broth, and keep constantly throwing down, and those that can catch most have most: and there is a river too of the best Malmsey wine that ever was tasted, without one drop of water."—"Surely," says Calandrino, "that must be a fine country indeed! what becomes of the capons after they are boiled?"—"O," quoth the other, "the Baschi there eat them all."—"And were you ever there?" said Calandrino. "Was I ever there, do you say? If I have been there once, I have been a thousand times."—"And how many miles is it off?"—"Many thousands."—"Then," said Calandrino, "it is farther off than the Abruzzi."—"A trifle."

Calandrino, observing that Maso had told all this without changing countenance, or so much as a smile, received it for gospel, and said, "It is too long a journey, or else I should like to go and scramble for those mackaroons, and help myself to sausages. But tell me, pray, are there none of the precious stones you were speaking of in those countries?" Maso replied, "Two there are, which are found to be of great virtue: one of these, which comes from Montisci, they make into mill-stones, which will grind flour of themselves; whence they have a saying, *That grace comes from God, and mill-stones from Montisci.* Such plenty there is of them, and yet they are as lightly esteemed among us, as emeralds are there, of which they have whole mountains, bigger than Monte Morello, that shine gloriously all night long. Now, these mill-stones they set in rings, and send to the Sultan; who gives them, in return, whatever they ask for them. The other stone is what we lapidaries call the Heliotrope, which renders invisible those who have it about them."—"That," said Calandrino, "is a rare virtue indeed! But where is this stone to be found?"—"It is usually met with upon our plains of Mugnone."—"Of what size and colour is it?"—"They are of different sizes, some large, some small," said Maso, "but all of a blackish hue."

Calandrino took care to remember all he had heard, and pretending to have other business, he went away with a design of going to seek for this stone; but first he had a mind to consult his two dear friends, Bruno and Buffalmacco, and he spent all that morning in seeking after them. Hearing at last that they were at work in the monastery at Faenza,

he ran thither, and calling them aside, he said to them: "Comrades, if you will believe me, we have it now in our power to be the richest people in all Florence: for I am informed, by a very credible person, that there is a stone in Mugnone, which makes those that carry it about them invisible; therefore I wish that we should go and look for it without delay, before any one else finds it. We shall certainly meet with it, for I know it very well; and when we have it, what else have we to do but put it in our pockets, and go to the bankers' shops and carry away what money we please? Nobody will see us, and we shall grow rich all at once, without having to smear walls all day just as snails do." Bruno and Buffalmacco were ready to burst with laughter; affecting, however, to marvel greatly at what they had heard, they highly commended their friend's wisdom. Buffalmacco then asked him what was the name of that wonderful stone? Calandrino, having no great memory, had forgot that; "But what have we to do with names," he said, "so long as we know the virtues of things? I think we should go and look for it immediately."—"But," quoth Bruno, "what sort of stone is it?"—"They are of all sizes, but generally black; therefore I am of opinion that we should pick up all the black stones we see till we meet with the true one: so let us lose no time."—"Stay a bit," quoth Bruno; then turning to Buffalmacco, "Calandrino speaks very sensibly," said he; "but yet I do not think this a fit time, for the sun is now very hot, and shines with such lustre, that those stones may appear whiteish at present, which are black of a morning: besides, this is a working-day, and many people are now abroad, who, seeing us employed in that manner, may guess at our business, and perhaps get the stone before us, and we lose all our labour. We had better, I think, go about it in the morning when we can more clearly distinguish colours: and on a holiday, because then no one will see us." Buffalmacco was decidedly of the same opinion; Calandrino acquiesced; and so it was agreed that they should all three go out on Sunday morning; and, in the mean time, Calandrino begged above all things that they would speak of the matter to no one, because it had been told him as a secret. At the same time he let them know what he had heard of the country of Bengodi, swearing that every word was truth.

As soon as he was gone, they agreed, between themselves, what to do. As for Calandrino, he was on thorns till Sunday came, when he rose at day-break, and called upon them;

and going through St. Gallo's gate, they went into the plains of Mugnone, and began to look for the marvellous stone. Now Calandrino stole along before the other two, skipping from one place to another, where he saw anything of a black stone, and putting them all into his pockets. And whilst his companions were picking up here and there one, he had filled his pockets, bosom, and coat-skirts, which he had tucked up for that purpose with his belt. Seeing him thus laden, and it being now dinner-time, one of them said to the other, just as had been previously concerted between them, "Where is Calandrino?"—"I do not know, but he was here just now."—"Here or there, I warrant he is gone home to his dinner, and has left us here upon a fool's errand."—"We are rightly served for being such fools as to believe him. Who but ourselves could ever have thought of finding such sort of stones here?" Calandrino, hearing what passed between them, took it for granted that he had the true stone, and so was invisible: and being overjoyed at his good luck, he resolved to go home without speaking a word, leaving them to follow if they would. Buffalmacco, perceiving his intent, said to Bruno, "What shall we do? Why not go home, as he has done." Bruno replied, "What should we stay any longer for? But I vow to God, Calandrino shall put no more tricks upon me. If he was as near me now as he has been all this morning, I would give him such a knock on the leg with this pebble, that he should have cause to remember it;" and as he was speaking the words, he let fly at him. Calandrino cut a caper, and clapped his hands to his leg, but never said a word, and got along as fast as he could. Buffalmacco took up another stone and said, "And I would touch him up on the back with this;" and so they kept pelting him all the way to the gate of St. Gallo, where, throwing down the rest of their stones, they let the guards into the secret, who humoured the thing, and let Calandrino pass as if they had not seen him. So he went on, without stopping, to his own house, which was near to the mills; and fortune was so favourable to this joke of theirs, that nobody said a word to him all through the city: and indeed he saw but few persons, because they were mostly at dinner.

Coming thus loaded home, he met his wife at the top of the stairs; and she being provoked at his long stay, fell upon him in a violent manner, saying, "The devil sure has possessed the man, that he will never come home till everybody has dined." Hearing this, and being sensible that

he was now seen, he roared out in wrath and vexation, "Oh! thou wicked woman, art thou there? Thou hast undone me; but I will be revenged on thee for it." And, throwing down all his stones, he ran violently at her, and beat her most unmercifully. In the mean time his two friends, after they had laughed a little with the guards at the gate, followed him, at a distance, to his house; and on coming to the door, heard him beating and abusing his wife. Making believe as if they were just come back, they called aloud to him, whilst he, all in a heat, and weary, looked out of the window, and desired them to come up: this they did, seemingly much out of temper, and seeing the stairs covered with stones, and the wife beaten and bruised, and crying piteously in one corner of the room, and Calandrino in another, all unbuttoned, and panting like a man quite spent, they said, "Why, how now, Calandrino! Are you going to build, that you make all this preparation? And you, Madam, how comes it to pass that you are so misused?" But Calandrino, quite fatigued, and vexed also for his supposed loss, could not muster breath enough to make them any answer. Buffalmacco therefore began again, "Calandrino," said he, "if you were angry with any other person, you ought not to have made a jest of us, as you have done, in leaving us yonder like a couple of fools; where you carried us to seek for a precious stone, and then went away without saying a word; but be assured you shall serve us so no more." "My friends," replied Calandrino, after much ado, "do not be in a passion; the case is different from what you imagine. Indeed I found the stone; and observe, I pray, whether it was not so. When you inquired after me the first time, I was then close to you; and as you were coming away without seeing me, I then walked before you." He then repeated to them everything that they had said and done on the way, and showed the bruises on his back and legs; after which he went on to say, "And as I was coming through the gate, laden with these stones, the guards let me pass unmolested, though you know what a fuss they always make, and how they examine everything. Besides, I met with divers of my friends in the street, who are continually teazing me to go in and drink with them, but not one of them said a word, because they never saw me. At last, when I came home, I met with this devil of a woman here, who straightway saw me, because women, you know, make everything lose its virtue; and so I, who was on the

point of being the happiest man in Florence, am now the most unfortunate; and it was upon that account that I beat her as long as I could lift my hands, and I could tear her to pieces for it. A curse upon the hour I first saw her, and when she came into this house." During this narration Buffalmacco and Bruno seemed to wonder very much, and frequently corroborated what Calandrino said, though they were fit to die with laughing. But when he was going to beat his wife a second time, they interposed, telling him, that she was not the person to blame in the case, but himself, for he should have given her notice to keep out of the way all that day; and that his disappointment was owing either to his ill-fortune, or else it was a judgment upon him for deceiving his friends; for after he knew that he had found the stone, he ought to have told them of it. At last, with great difficulty, they made peace between him and his poor wife, and left him still sad and moody, with his house full of stones.

[This story is taken, with little variation, from the Fabliau 'De Pietre et Alison,' of the Trouveur Guillaume le Normand. (Le Grand, iv, 297.) It is also the forty-seventh of the second part of Bandello.]

NOVEL IV.

The provost of the church of Fiesole is in love with a lady who has no liking to him, and he, thinking that he is in bed with her, is all the time with her maid, and her brothers bring the bishop thither to witness it.

ELIZA's novel was ended, when the queen, without delay, turned to Emilia, who began in this manner:—It will appear from our preceding novels, that priests, friars, and the rest of the clergy, have contributed their full share to our diversion: but as so much can hardly be said, but something may be added, I shall, therefore, tell you a story of a certain provost, who had a mind to make a lady love him, whether she would or not, and who was accordingly treated by her as he deserved.

Fiesole, the summit whereof you may descry from this place, was once a great and ancient city, and, though now in ruins, had always its bishop, and so it has still. Near the cathedral, in a little house of her own, a widow lady, named Ricarda, resided for the greatest part of the year, with two

of her brothers, both very worthy gentlemen. Now, as she went constantly to church, it happened that the provost fell so much in love with her, that he was never easy but in her company; and in process of time he had the assurance to speak to her, entreating her to regard him with the same tender feelings he entertained for her. This provost was somewhat ancient, but yet of a juvenile disposition: he was so proud also and haughty, and did everything with so ill a grace, that he was disagreeable to all the world. The lady, in particular, was so far from loving him that she hated him worse than the megrims; wherefore, she very prudently replied, "Sir, I am much obliged to you for your gracious assurance that you love me, but such love as may and ought to subsist between us should never have anything disreputable in it. You are my spiritual father, a priest also, and in years; all which considerations should inspire you with different sentiments: on the other hand, I am no girl, being, as you see, in my widowhood, and, therefore, more discretion will be expected from me; for which reason I must beg your pardon, being resolved neither to love you nor be loved by you, in the way you propose." The provost, no way daunted by one denial, ceased not his solicitations, as well by letters as by word of mouth, every time he saw her at church; till growing weary of his impertinence, she resolved to rid herself of him in such a manner as he deserved, since she saw there was no other way; but yet she would do nothing without first consulting her brothers. Letting them know, therefore, the provost's design upon her, and what she meant to do, and having free leave from them, she went in a few days to church as usual.

When the provost saw her come in, he went familiarly to meet her, and she receiving him with an open countenance, walked purposely apart with him, and heaving a deep sigh, said, "I have often heard, sir, that there is no fort so strong but it may be taken, which I now find to be my own case, for you have so beset me with complaisance and love, that I have been forced to break my resolution, and am now disposed to be at your service." He replied, with a great deal of joy, "Madam, I hold myself much obliged to you, and, to tell you the truth, I have often wondered how you could hold out so long, especially as I have never met with anything like it before. Nay, I have said, that if women were made of silver, they would not be worth a farthing, because there is none of them would be able to stand the test. But

tell me, when can we be together?" She replied, "Sweet sir, it may be whenever you please, as I have no husband to inquire after me at nights; but I cannot think of a place."—"How so? why not in your own house?"—"Sir," she made answer, "you know I have two brothers, who have company most evenings, and our house is very small, so that it is impossible for you to come there, unless you could submit to be like a dumb person, and in the dark also: if you will consent to that it may be done, because they never come into my chamber; but yet theirs is so near to mine that the least whisper is soon heard."—"Madam," quoth he, "never mind it for one or two nights, till I can think of some more convenient place."—"Just as you please, sir, but I beg of you that it may be a secret."—"Madam, make no doubt of that: but, if possible, let it be this evening."—"With all my heart," said she; and directing him how and when he was to come, she left him, and went home.

Now, the lady had a maid not over young, and the ugliest creature that ever was born; for she had a flat nose, a wry mouth, great thick lips, long black teeth, sore eyes, with a green and yellow complexion, like a mulatto; besides all this, she was both lame and crooked, and her name was Ciuta, but, having such a miserable countenance of her own, she was called, by way of derision, Ciutazza (*i. e.* Trull); but with all her ugliness she was not without a spice of roguish humour. This maid the widow called to her, and said, "Ciutazza, if thou wilt do a little job for me, I will give thee a new gown."—"Madam," quoth she, "give it me, and I will go through fire and water to serve you."—"I mean," said the lady, "to have thee sleep with a man this night in my bed; caress him, and make much of him, but be sure not to speak a word, for fear my brothers should hear thee in the next room; and in the morning thou shalt have the gown."—"To oblige you, Madam," said Ciutazza, "I would sleep with half a dozen." And so in the evening the provost came, according to agreement, whilst the lady's brothers were in their own room, as she had directed, where they took care that he should hear them; and the provost went silently into her chamber in the dark, as did also Ciutazza, and to bed they went.

As soon as this was done, the lady told her brothers, and left them to do the rest, as they had before resolved. Accordingly they went secretly to the piazza, when fortune was more favourable to their design than they could have

expected, for they met the bishop coming to their house to pay them a visit. They turned back with him, and as it was in the summer they showed him into a little court, lit up with flambeaux. There, as they sat together over some choice wine, one of the young gentlemen said, "My lord, since you have so kindly deigned, of your own accord, to visit our little dwelling, to which we were going to invite you, we beg you would please to see a curiosity which we have ready to show you." The bishop consented, and one of them, taking a light, led the way, followed by the bishop and all the rest, into the chamber where the provost and Ciutazza were in bed, when they found them asleep in each other's arms. The provost awoke upon this, ashamed and frightened to death, and hid his head under the bed-clothes, whilst the bishop reprimanded him severely, and made him put his head out, that he might see whom he had got in bed with him. Then indeed, finding how the lady had served him, and being sensible of the utter shame he had incurred, the provost was the most miserable man alive. Having put on his clothes again, by the bishop's order, he was sent under guard to his own house, to undergo a penance equal to his crime. The bishop then desired to know how the affair had happened, and they related every particular, on which he highly commended both the lady and her brothers, who, rather than imbrue their hands in a clergyman's blood, had dealt with him according to his merits, in a different manner. He ordered him, therefore, a penance of forty days, but love and disdain made him mourn nine days more; and, for a long time after, he could never go along the street, but the boys would point at him, and say, "There goes the priest that lay with Ciutazza;" which was such a mortification, that he became almost distracted. Thus the good and prudent lady freed herself from the provost's importunities, and Ciutazza got a new gown and a night's diversion.

NOVEL V.

Three young sparks play a trick with a judge, whilst he is sitting upon the bench hearing causes.

THE lady in Emilia's novel was highly commended for what she had done, when the queen looked towards Filostrato, and said, "It is now your turn to speak." He conse-

quently thus began:—A young gentleman, mentioned some time since by Eliza, viz. Maso del Saggio, makes me pass over a story which I meant to have told you, in order to relate one of him, and certain of his friends, which, though a little unseemly, may make you laugh nevertheless, and so I shall venture to report it.

You must all have heard that we have often had Podestas come hither from the marquisate of Ancona, the most paltry people imaginable, and so extremely miserable and covetous, that they have brought fellows along with them by way of judges and notaries, who seem to have been rather taken from the plough-tail, or out of a cobbler's shop, than the schools of law. Now there was a certain person came once as Podesta, and amongst the judges that attended him was one Niccola da san Lepidio, whose aspect bespoke him rather a tinker than anything else, and who was deputed with the rest of the judges to hear criminal causes. And as it happens that the people frequently go to those courts who have no business, so it chanced that Maso del Saggio was there one morning in quest of one of his friends; and coming to where this Niccola was sitting, began to eye him with great curiosity, as though he were some strange outlandish bird. He had a greasy fur cap on, with an ink-horn hanging at his girdle, and a gown shorter than his under coat; but what appeared the most comical of all was, that his breeches came down to his ankles, and yet they were so scantily made, that he could not keep them buttoned, but they were constantly open all before. Such a figure as this soon made Maso forget what he had come about: and meeting with two of his companions, the one named Ribi, and the other Matteuzzo, men of as much humour as himself, he said to them, "You will oblige me very much if you will go into the court along with me, for I can show you the oddest figure perhaps that you ever saw:" so he took them to see the judge and his breeches.

As soon as they had come into the court, they fell a laughing, and upon a near approach they observed that it would be very easy to get under the platform on which the judge was seated, and that the boards were so broken that a man might put his hand and arm up through them. Seeing this, Maso said to his companions, "Let us pull his breeches down entirely, for it may easily be done." They saw at once which way he meant, and, having agreed about it, they came thither again the next morning; and the court being

crowded with people, Matteuzzo crept privately under the bench where the judge was sitting. Then Maso went on one side, and took hold of his gown, whilst Ribi did the same on the other side, and began to cry out, "My lord, for heaven's sake, before that thief there by your side goes away, will you order him to restore me a pair of shoes which he has stolen from me, and now denies it, though I saw him in the fact, and it is not a month since he had them new soled?" Ribi, on the other side, bawled aloud, "My lord, do not believe him, for he is a most intolerable villain; and because I came to demand a wallet that he had stolen from me, he has now trumped up this story of his shoes. If you will not believe me, I can bring Trecca, my neighbour, and Grassa, the woman that sells tripes, and the person that sweeps St. Mary's church, who saw him as he came out of the country." But Maso made such a clamour on the other side, that he would not let Ribi be heard, and Ribi roared against Maso with all his might. The judge standing up to hear what each had to say, Matteuzzo took that opportunity to put his hand up between the boards, and laid hold of his breeches, which came down immediately, as the judge happened to be lean and thin about the crupper; whilst he, perceiving what had happened, and not knowing the reason, would have pulled his gown before him to conceal it, and endeavoured to sit down again: but Maso held him up on one side, and Ribi on the other, crying out, "My lord, you do me great injustice not to attend to what I say, and to turn your back upon me, without giving me the hearing;" (for there were no indictments in writing for such trivial cases.) And they kept him fast between them in that manner, till all the people in the court saw that he had his breeches about his heels. In the mean time Matteuzzo had stolen away undiscovered; and Ribi, thinking that he had now done enough, said, "I will appeal elsewhere for justice, I vow to Heaven;" and Maso let go on the other part also, saying, "Some time or other I shall find you more at leisure than you have been this morning." Thus they parted different ways, and got out of court as fast as they could.

The judge, pulling up his breeches before the people, and being now sensible of the trick that had been put upon him, began to inquire where those two men were gone, that had been complaining to him about their shoes and their wallet; and hearing nothing of them, he swore that he would soon know whether it was a custom at Florence to pull a judge's

breeches down as he sat on the bench. The Podesta also was in a great rage about it, till being told by some of his friends that this was done only to let him see that the people all took notice, that, instead of bringing judges, he had brought some paltry scoundrels among them, to make a better trade of it, he thought it best to hold his tongue. Consequently nothing more was said about it at that time.

NOVEL VI.

Bruno and Buffalmacco steal a pig from Calandrino, and make a charm to find out the thief, with pills made of ginger and some sack; giving him, at the same time, pills made of aloes: thereby they make it appear that he had furtively sold the pig, and they make him pay handsomely, for fear they should tell his wife.

After Filostrato's novel, which had made them all very merry, the queen turned to Filomena, who began thus:—As Filostrato was led to the last story by the mention of the name of Maso, in like manner has the novel concerning Calandrino and his two companions brought to my mind another relating to the same two persons, which will, I think, afford you pleasure. Who these people were, it would be needless to say, because you had enough of that before. Therefore I shall begin by telling you that Calandrino had a little farm not far from Florence, which came to him by right of his wife; and amongst his other goods there, he used to have a pig fatted every year, and some time about December he and his wife went always to kill and salt it for the use of the family. Now it happened once, she being unwell at the time, that he went thither by himself to kill this pig; which Bruno and Buffalmacco hearing, and, knowing she was not to be there, they went to spend a few days with a great friend of theirs, a priest in Calandrino's neighbourhood. Now the pig had been killed the very day they came thither, and Calandrino seeing them along with the priest, called to them, and said, "Welcome, kindly; I would gladly have you see what a good manager I am." Then, taking them into the house, he showed them this pig. They saw that it was fat, and were told by him that it was to be salted for his family. "Salted, booby!" said Bruno. "Sell it, let us make merry with the money, and tell your wife that it was stolen."—"No," said Calandrino, "she will never believe it; and besides, she would go near to turn me out of doors. Trouble

me then no further about any such thing, for I will never do it." They said a great deal more to him, but all to no purpose; at length he invited them to supper, but did it in such a manner that they refused. After they had come away from him, said Bruno to Buffalmacco, "Suppose we steal this pig from him to-night."—"How is it possible?"—"O, I know well enough how to do it, if he does not remove it in the mean time from the place where we just now saw it."—"Then let us do it, and afterwards we and the parson will make merry over it." The priest assured them that he should like it of all things. "We must use a little art," quoth Bruno: "you know how covetous he is, and how freely he drinks always when it is at another's cost. Let us get him then to the tavern, where the parson shall make a pretence of treating us all, out of compliment to him; he will soon get drunk, and then the thing will be easy enough, as there is nobody in the house but himself." This was done, and Calandrino, finding that the parson was to pay, took his glasses off pretty freely, and getting his dose, walked home betimes, left the door open, thinking that it was shut, and so went to bed. Buffalmacco and Bruno went from the tavern to sup with the priest, and as soon as supper was over, they took proper materials with them to get into the house; but finding the door open, they carried off the pig to the priest's, and went to bed likewise. In the morning, as soon as Calandrino had slept off his wine, he rose, came down stairs, and finding the door open, and his pig gone, began to inquire of everybody if they knew anything of the matter, and receiving no tidings of it, he made a terrible outcry, saying, "What shall I do now? somebody has stolen my pig." Bruno and Buffalmacco were no sooner out of bed, than they went to his house to hear what he would say; and the moment he saw them, he roared out, "O, my friends, my pig is stolen!" Upon this Bruno whispered him, and said, "Well, I am glad to see you wise for once in your life."—"Alas!" quoth he, "it is too true."—"Keep still in the same story," said Bruno, "and make noise enough for every one to believe you." Calandrino now began to bawl louder, "Indeed! I vow and swear to you that it is stolen."—"That's right; be sure you let everybody hear you, that it may appear so."—"Do you think that I would forswear myself about it? May I be hanged this moment if it is not so!"—"How is it possible?" quoth Bruno; "I saw it but last night; never imagine that I can believe it."—"It is so, how-

ever," answered he, "and I am undone: I know not how to go home again, for my wife will never believe me, and I shall have no peace this twelvemonth."—"It is a most unhappy thing," said Bruno, "if it be true; but you know I put it into your head to say so last night, and you should not make sport both with your wife and us at the same time." At this he began to roar out afresh, saying "Good God! you make me mad to hear you talk; I tell you once for all that it was stolen this very night."—"Nay, if it be so," quoth Buffalmacco, "we must think of some way to get it back again."—"And what way must we take," said he, "to find it?"—"Depend upon it," replied the other, "that nobody came from the Indies to steal it; it must be somewhere in your neighbourhood, and if you could get the people together, I could make a charm with some bread and cheese, that would soon discover the thief."—"True," said Bruno, "but they would know in that case what you were about: and the person that has it would never come near you."—"How must we manage then?" said Buffalmacco. "Oh!" replied Bruno, "you shall see me do it with some pills of ginger, and a little wine, which I will ask them to come and drink. They will have no suspicion what our design is, and we can make a charm of these, as well as of the bread and cheese."—"Very right," quoth the other. "Well, what do you say, Calandrino? Have you a mind we should try it?"—"For Heaven's sake do," he said, "were I only to know who the thief is, I should be half comforted."—"Well, then," quoth Bruno, "I am ready to go to Florence for the things, if you will only give me some money." He happened to have a few shillings in his pocket, which he gave him, and off went Bruno.

When he got to Florence, Bruno went to a friend's house, and bought a pound of ginger made into pills. He also got two pills made of aloes, which had a private mark that he should not mistake them, being candied over with sugar like the rest. Then having bought a jar of good wine, he returned to Calandrino, and said, "To-morrow you must take care to invite every one that you have the least suspicion of: it is a holiday, and they will be glad to come. We will complete the charm to-night, and bring the things to your house in the morning, and then I will take care to do and say on your behalf what is necessary upon such an occasion." Calandrino did as he was told, and in the morning he had nearly all the people in the parish assembled under an elm-tree in the churchyard. His two friends produced the pills

and wine, and making the people stand round in a circle, Bruno said to them, "Gentlemen, it is fit that I should tell you the reason of your being summoned here in this manner, to the end, if anything should happen which you do not like, that I be not blamed for it. You must know, then, that Calandrino had a pig stolen last night, and, as some of the company here must have taken it, he, that he may find out the thief, would have every man take and eat one of these pills, and drink a glass of wine after it; and whoever the guilty person is, you will find he will not be able to get a bit of it down, but it will taste so bitter that he will be forced to spit it out: so that, to prevent such open shame, he had better, whoever he is, make a secret confession to the priest, and I will proceed no farther."

All present declared their readiness to eat, so placing them all in order, he gave every man his pill, and coming to Calandrino, he gave one of the aloe pills to him, which he straightway put into his mouth, and no sooner did he begin to chew it, than he was forced to spit it out. Every one was now attentive to see who spit his pill out, and whilst Bruno kept going round, apparently taking no notice of Calandrino, he heard somebody say behind him, "Hey-day! what is the meaning of its disagreeing so with Calandrino?" Bruno now turned suddenly about, and seeing that Calandrino had spit out his pill, he said, "Stay a little, honest friends, and be not too hasty in judging; it may be something else that has made him spit, and therefore he shall try another." So he gave him the other aloe pill, and then went on to the rest that were unserved. But if the first was bitter to him, this he thought much more so: however, he endeavoured to get it down as well as he could, but it was impossible; it made the tears run down his cheeks, and he was forced to spit it out at last, as he had done the other. In the meantime Buffalmacco was going about with the wine; but when he and all of them saw what Calandrino had done, they began to bawl out that he had robbed himself; and some of them abused him roundly.

After they were all gone, Buffalmacco said, "I always thought that you yourself were the thief, and that you were willing to make us believe the pig was stolen, in order to keep your money in your pocket, lest we should expect a treat upon the occasion." Calandrino, who had still the taste of the aloes in his mouth, fell a swearing that he knew nothing of the matter. "Honour bright,

now, comrade," said Buffalmacco, "what did you get for it?" This made him quite desperate. Then Bruno struck in: "I was just now told," said he, "by one of the company, that you have a mistress in this neighbourhood to whom you are very kind, and that he is confident you have given it to her. You know you once took us to the plains of Mugnone, to look for some black stones, when you left us in the lurch, and pretended you had found them; and now you think to swear, and make us believe, that your pig is stolen, when you have either given it away or sold it. You have put so many tricks upon us, that we intend to be fooled no more by you. Therefore, as we have had a deal of trouble in the affair, you shall make us amends, by giving us two couple of fowls, unless you mean that we should tell your wife." Calandrino now perceiving that he was not to be believed, and being unwilling to have them add to his troubles, by bringing his wife upon his back, was forced to give them the fowls, which they took to Florence along with the pork, leaving him there to brood over his losses and his ignominious discomfiture.

NOVEL VII.

A certain scholar is in love with a widow lady named Helena, who, being enamoured of another person, makes the former wait a whole night for her during the midst of winter, in the snow. In return, he afterwards contrives that she shall stand naked on the top of a tower, in the middle of July, exposed to the sun and all manner of insects.

THE company could not help laughing at Calandrino's simplicity, though they thought it too hard for him to lose both the fowls and the pig. The story being ended, the queen ordered Pampinea to begin, which she did in this manner:—It often happens that the mockery which a man intends for another, falls upon his own head, and therefore it is no mark of a person's good sense to take delight in such practices. In our former novels, we have made ourselves very merry with divers tricks that have been put upon people, where no revenge has been taken; but I design to move your compassion for a just return which a certain lady of our city met with, whose jest recoiled upon herself, and to the hazard of her life, being mocked in the same manner; the hearing of which may be of great service to you, as it will

be a caution not to do the like; and you will be wise if you attend to it.

There lived, not long since, at Florence, a handsome young lady, of a good family, as well as plentiful fortune, named Helena, who, being left a widow, had chosen to continue so, having found a young gentleman who was quite to her mind, and with whom, by the assistance of her favourite maid, she carried on a very satisfactory intrigue. In the mean time, a young gentleman of our city, whose name was Rinieri, returned from Paris, where he had long studied, not for the sake of retailing his learning by the inch, as many do, but only to know the nature of things, and their causes, as becomes a gentleman. He was much respected in Florence, on account both of his rank and learning, and lived there as became a worthy citizen. But, as it often happens that persons of the most sense and scholarship are the soonest caught in the snares of love, so it fell out with our Rinieri. For, being at a feast one day, he met with this lady, clothed in her weeds, when she seemed to him so full of beauty and sweetness, that he never saw any one to compare to her; and happy he thought the man whom fortune should bless with her as his wife. And casting his eye towards her once and again, and being sensible that great and valuable things are not to be attained without trouble, he resolved to make it his whole care to please her, and to gain her affection if it were possible. The lady, who did not always look upon the ground, but thought full as well of herself as she deserved, throwing her eyes artfully about her, was soon sensible if any one beheld her with pleasure; so she immediately took notice of Rinieri, and said, smiling to herself, "I think I am not come out to-day in vain, for I seem to have caught a gudgeon." And she would give him now and then a glance from a corner of her eye, to let him see she was pleased with him, thinking that the more admirers she had, of the greater value would her charms be to that person on whom she had bestowed them.

Our scholar now began to lay all his philosophy aside, and turned his thoughts entirely to the lovely widow; and learning where she lived he was continually passing that way, under one pretence or other, thinking thereby to please her; whilst the lady, for the reason before given, seemed gratified by his devotion. By and by he found means of talking to the maid, desiring her interest and intercession with her mistress, so that he might obtain her favour. The maid

promised to do her utmost, and forthwith spoke to her lady, who turned Rinieri and his love into extreme derision. "Observe now," she said, "this man is come here to lose the little sense that he went to fetch from Paris, and he shall have what he looks for. Go, then, and tell him that my love is equally great for him, but that I must have regard to my honour; which, if he is as wise as he would be thought, he will like me the better for." Alas! poor woman, she knew not what it was to try her wit against a scholar! The maid delivered her message, upon which the scholar, being overjoyed, began to press the thing more closely, and to write letters, and send presents, which were all received, though he had no answer in return but what was general; and in this manner he was long kept in suspense.

At last the widow related the whole affair to her lover, and he being a little uneasy and jealous about it, to convince him that his suspicion was ill-grounded, and being much solicited by the scholar, she sent her maid to tell Rinieri, that she had yet had no opportunity to oblige him, since she had made a discovery to him of her love, but that the next day, being Christmas day, she hoped to receive him; bidding him come that evening into her court-yard, and she would meet him there as soon as it was convenient. The scholar, overjoyed at this, failed not to come at the time appointed, when he was put into the court-yard by the maid, and locked up there to wait. Meanwhile the lady had invited her lover to be with her that very night; and after they had supped agreeably together, she let him know what she meant to do, adding, "And now you may see how great my regard is for you, as well as for him of whom you have been so foolishly jealous." The lover listened eagerly to this, being desirous of seeing some proof of that for which he had only her word. A great snow had fallen the day before, and everything was covered with it, which made our scholar feel colder than he could have wished; however, he bore it with great patience, expecting soon to have amends made him.—After a little while the lady said to her lover, "Let us go into the chamber, and see out of the window what this man is doing, of whom you were jealous, and what answers he will make to the maid, whom I have sent to talk with him." So they went up stairs, and looking out, without being seen, they heard the girl saying to him, "Sir, my lady is exceedingly uneasy, for one of her brothers has happened to come to see her this evening, and they have had a great deal to talk

together, and he would needs sup with her, nor is he yet gone away; but I believe he will not stay long, and for that reason she has not been able to come to you, but will make what haste she can; and she hopes you will not take it ill, that you are forced to wait thus." The scholar supposing it to be really so, replied, "Pray, tell your mistress to have no care for me, till she can conveniently be with me, but that I hope she will be as speedily as possible." The girl then left him, and went to bed.

"Well," said the lady to her lover, "what think you now? Can you imagine, if I had that love for him which you seemed to apprehend, that I would let him stay there to be frozen to death?" Thus they talked and laughed together about the poor scholar, while he was forced to walk backwards and forwards in the court, to keep himself warm, without having anything to sit down upon, or the least shelter from the weather. He cursed the brother's long stay, and expected that everything he heard was the door opening for him—but expected in vain. About midnight, Helena again said to her lover, "Well, my dear, what is your opinion now of our scholar? Whether do you think his sense or my love the greater at this time? Surely you will let me hear no more of that jealousy which you seemed to express yesterday."—"Heart of my body," replied the lover, "I know that as you are my treasure, my joy, and my only hope, so am I yours."—"Then give me a thousand kisses to show that you speak the truth." Embraces followed of course, and after some time so spent, she said again, "We will take another peep, and see whether that fire be extinct or not, which this new lover of mine used to write me word had well nigh consumed him." They got up, and going again to the window, they saw Rinieri dancing a jig in the snow, to the chattering of his teeth. "You see now," she said, "that I can make people dance, without the music either of fiddles or bagpipes; but let us go to the door, and do you stand still, and listen whilst I speak to him; perhaps we may have as much diversion in that manner, as by seeing him." She went softly, and called to him through the key-hole, which made the scholar rejoice exceedingly, supposing that he was to be admitted. Stepping to the door, "I am here, Madam," he said, "for Heaven's sake open the door, for I am ready to die with cold." "Surely," she replied, "you can never be so starved with this little snow; it is much colder at Paris: but I can by no means let you

in yet; for this unlucky brother of mine, who came to sup with me last night, is yet with me; but he will go soon, and then I will come directly and open the door: it was with great difficulty that I could get away from him now, to come to you, and beg you would not be uneasy at waiting so long." —"Let me beg of you, then," said he, "but to open the door, that I may stand only under cover, for it snows fast, and afterwards I will wait as long as you please."—"Alas! my dear love, the door makes such a noise always in opening, that my brother will hear it; but I will go and bid him depart first, and then open it."—"Make what haste you can," said the scholar, "and pray have a good fire ready against I come in, for I am so benumbed, that I have almost lost all sense of feeling."—"Impossible! if that be true which you have so often written to me, that you were all on fire with love; but I see now that you were jesting all the time. Have a good heart, however, for I am going."

The poor scholar who seemed transformed into a stork, his teeth chattered so, now perceiving that he was hoaxed, made several attempts to open the door, and looked round to see if there was any other way to get out; but not finding any, he began to curse the inclemency of the weather, the lady's cruelty, the long nights, and his own folly. Exasperated to the last degree, his ardent love was now changed into as rank a hatred, whilst he busied himself in contriving various methods of revenge, which he longed for as passionately as he had before desired to be with the lady. The long night at last wore away, and when daylight began to appear, the maid, as she had before been instructed, came down into the court, and said, with a show of pity, "It was very unlucky, sir, that person's coming to our house last night, for he has given us a world of trouble, and you are, in consequence, almost frozen to death. But have a little patience; for what could not be done then may be brought to pass another time. I know very well that nothing could have given my lady so much uneasiness." The scholar, who with all his wrath was wise enough to know that threats serve only as armour for the enemy, kept his resentment within his own breast, and, without showing himself the least disturbed, said in a low voice, for he was so hoarse he could hardly speak, "In truth, I never had a worse night in my life; but I know very well that your lady is not at all to blame, because she came down to me with a great deal of humanity, to excuse herself, and comfort me. Besides, as you say, what could

not be now, may be another time. Farewell, and pray give my service to her." He then made what shift he could to crawl home, threw himself upon the bed to rest, and when he awoke he found he had lost the use both of his hands and feet. He therefore sent for physicians, and acquainted them with the cause of his illness, but it was a very long time before they could succeed in supplying his shrunken nerves, so that he could stir his limbs; and had it not been for his youth, and the warm weather coming on soon after, he could hardly ever have got over it. At last he was sound and well again, and keeping his enmity to himself, he pretended to be as much in love with the widow as ever; and fortune furnished him after a while with an opportunity for satisfying his revenge.

Helena's lover had taken a fancy to another lady, and turned herself adrift, which gave her such concern, that she seemed to pine away. Her maid, who was much grieved finding no way to comfort her for the loss of her spark, and seeing the scholar pass that way sometimes, had a foolish notion come into her head, that he might be able to bring back the truant by some magical operation, of which he was said to be a great master; and she acquainted her mistress with her thoughts. The foolish lady, never reflecting that had Rinieri been really a proficient in magic he would have employed it on his own account, listened to the girl, and bade her learn from him whether he was willing to oblige her, promising anything in return that he should desire. The maid delivered the message, and the scholar (saying with great joy to himself, "Thank Heaven, the time is now come for me to be revenged of this woman for the injury she did me in return for my great love") replied, "Tell your mistress that she need give herself no trouble, for were her lover in the Indies, I would bring him back to ask her pardon. How this is to be done I will impart to her as soon as she pleases; and so pray acquaint her from me with my service."

The girl reported what he said, and it was settled that they should meet in Santa Lucia del Prato. Accordingly, they came thither, and had much conversation by themselves; and the widow forgetting how he had been served by her, acquainted him with the whole affair, and desired his assistance. The scholar then said, "Madam, amongst other things that I studied at Paris was the black art, in which I made a great progress; but, as it is a sinful practice, I had

made a resolution never to follow it, either for myself or any other person; but in truth I love you so much, that I am unable to refuse either that or anything else which you may require from me; and so if I must go to the devil for this, why then I am ready to do so since such is your pleasure. I must remind you however, that it is a more troublesome operation than you may imagine, either to bring a man back to love a woman, or a woman to love a man; for it is to be done only by the person concerned, who should have a great presence of mind; for all must be done in the night, in a solitary place, and nobody present; conditions which I do not know whether you will be able to conform to." The lady, more amorous than wise, replied, "My love is such, that I would undertake anything to win back him who has abandoned me so wrongfully; only tell me in what I must show that presence of mind you speak of." "Madam," said the scholar, "I must make an image of tin in his name whom you wish to have yours, which I shall send to you; and immediately, whilst the moon is in the decline, you must, after your first sleep, bathe seven times with it in the river; after which you must go, still naked, into some high tree, or upon some uninhabited house-top, and, turning to the north, with the image in your hand, repeat seven times certain words, which I shall give you in writing; and then two damsels, the most beautiful that ever you saw, will appear to you, graciously demanding what service you have for them to do, which you may safely tell them, taking care not to name one person for another. They will then leave you, and you may go afterwards and dress yourself, and return home, being assured that before midnight your lover will come with tears in his eyes to beg your pardon, and from that time he will never forsake you more." The lady, hearing this story, began to think she had already recovered her lover, and replied, "Never fear, I can do all this very well, having the most convenient place for the purpose that can be; for there is a farm of mine close to the river Arno, and as it is now the month of July, the bathing will be very pleasant. And now I remember, there is an uninhabited tower in a lonely place not far off, where the shepherds climb up sometimes by help of a ladder, to look for their straved cattle; there I can do what you have enjoined me." The scholar, who knew perfectly both the farm and the tower, answered, "Madam, I never was in that country, and therefore am unacquainted with the farm and tower you mention; but if it be as you

say, there cannot be a more convenient spot in the world. Well, then, at a proper time I will send the image, and the words you are to repeat; but I entreat you, when your point is secured, and you find how well I have served you, that you will be mindful of me in the promise you have made me." The lady assured him she would do so without fail, and so took leave of him, and went home.

The scholar now concluding that his scheme had taken effect, had an image made, wrote out some rigmarole by way of charm, and sent it to the widow, letting her know that the thing must be done the following night; and then he went privately with one servant to a friend's house which was near, to be ready for what he had designed. The widow went with her maid to her farm, where, pretending to go to bed, and having sent her maid to sleep, she went in the middle of the night to the river side, close to the tower, and looking round to see that nobody was near, she stripped, hid her clothes under a bush, bathed herself seven times with the image, and then went naked to the tower with the image in her hand. The scholar had previously hid himself along with his servant in the sallows near the place, and watched all the lady's movements. When he saw her pass close to him in that manner, admiring the extraordinary beauty of her person, and thinking what it would be in a little while, he began somewhat to relent. Then a sudden tempest of desire assailed him, and he could hardly resist the temptation to rush out from his ambush, and revel in such loveliness. But when he called to mind her unparalleled inhumanity towards him, and what he had suffered, there was an end of pity and desire, and he resolved to put his purpose in execution. So she mounted to the top of the tower, and having turned to the north, began to say the words which he had given her to repeat, whilst he went softly after her, and took away the ladder, waiting afterwards to see what she would say and do.

She had now said the words over seven times, and was expecting the two damsels to come; but the whole night passed away; it was cooler than was by any means agreeable, and daylight began to appear, but no damsels. Weary and vexed at her disappointment, she said to herself, "I begin to fear he had a mind I should pass such a night as I occasioned him to have; but, if that was his intention, he has made a mistake, for the nights are not one-third part so long now as they were then, and besides the cold was infinitely greater at

that time." She then determined to come down before it should be broad daylight; but, looking for the ladder, she perceived it was taken away. Upon this her heart failed her, and she fell down in a swoon. As soon as she came to herself, she began to lament bitterly, and (well knowing that it was the scholar's doing) to blame herself for giving him the provocation, as well as for putting herself into his power afterwards. Looking everywhere then to see if there was any other way to come down, and finding none, she renewed her lamentations, saying to herself, "Unhappy wretch! what will your brothers, relations, and all the people of Florence say, when it shall be known that you were found here naked? Your character will be quite lost; and say what you will in your own vindication, the scholar will contradict it. Miserable woman! to lose both your honour and your lover at the same time!" Here her grief was such, that she thought of throwing herself down headlong; but as the sun was now rising she got to one corner of the wall to see if she could discover any shepherd's boy to send for her maid, when it happened that the scholar, who had been taking a nap upon the grass, awoke and saw her, and she him. "Good morrow, madam," he said, "are the damsels come yet?" At this she fell crying most bitterly, and desired he would come under the tower, that they might have some talk together. He readily obliged her in that, whilst she, lying down with only her head appearing above the battlements, began to weep and say, "Sir, if I caused you to have a bad night, you are sufficiently revenged; for, though it is in July, yet I have been just starved to death, as I am naked; not to mention my grief for the trick I put upon you, and for my own folly in believing you, that I have almost cried my eyes out of my head. Therefore I entreat you, not out of any regard to me, for none is due from you; but for your own sake, as you are a gentleman, that you would esteem what you have already made me suffer a sufficient revenge, and that you would order my clothes to be brought, and let me come down; nor offer to take that away from me which it is not in your power to restore; I mean my honour. For if I denied you my company one night, you may have it as many nights as you please in return for that one. Let this, therefore, suffice, and, like a man of worth, think it enough that you have had me in your power; nor set your wit against a woman's. Where is the glory in an eagle's vanquishing a dove? Then for Heaven's sake, and your own honour, show me some pity!"

The scholar found himself alternately influenced by two different motives; one while he was moved with compassion to see her in that distress; but revenge and fury at length gained the superiority, and he replied as follows:—

"Madam, if my prayers (though unattended with tears, and such soothing expressions as yours) could have procured only a little shelter for me the night that I was dying in your court, all covered with snow, I could, in that case, easily harken now to what you have to say. But you may remember that you were then with your gallant, entertaining him with my sufferings; let him come, and bring your clothes, and the ladder; for he will be the best guardian of your honour, who has so often had it in his keeping. Why do you not call upon him, then? It is his business more than any other person's; and if he do not succour you, whom will he regard? You may now see whether your love for him, or your great cleverness, is able to deliver you from my folly; as you were pleased to make a doubt whether that folly or your love for him was greater. And concerning the offer of your person, I desire it not, neither could you withhold it from me if I did. No, keep it all for your lover; for my own part, I have had enough of one night. You think to cajole me, by speaking of my great worth and gentility, and would have me believe that I shall lessen myself by this usage of you. But your flattery shall never blind my understanding, as your fair promises once did; I now know myself, and can say, that I never learnt so much all the time I was at Paris, as you taught me in one night. But, supposing even that I were disposed to be generous, you are no proper object. Amongst savage beasts, as you are, the end of vengeance is death; but with men, indeed, what you say should avail. Therefore, although I am no eagle, yet knowing you to be no dove, but rather a venomous serpent, I shall persecute you with all my might, as an old enemy; though what I do cannot be called revenge, so properly as chastisement; for revenge ought not to exceed the offence given, whereas, considering how I was served by you, were I to take away your life, this would not be equal to it, nor even the lives of a hundred more such women as yourself. For what the devil are you better (setting aside a little beauty, which a few years will take away from you) than the paltriest chamber-maid? And yet, no thanks to you, that the life of a worthy gentleman was not lost, as you were pleased just now to call me, a life which may be of greater service to the world than a hun-

dred thousand such as yours could ever be whilst the world endures. Learn then what it is to mock and abuse people of understanding, and scholars, and be wiser for the time to come, if you happen to escape. But if you have such a desire to come down, why do you not throw yourself to the ground? By breaking your neck, if it please heaven, you may at once escape the punishment which you seem to undergo, and make me the happiest man in the world. So I have nothing more to say to you, but that I have showed you the way up to this tower; do you find a way, if you can, to come down as readily as you could insult me."

All the while the scholar was speaking, was she weeping, while the time kept going on, and the sun rose higher and higher. And when he had made an end, she said, "Ah! cruel man! if that unhappy night still galls you, and my crime appears so heinous, that neither my youth, my tears, nor my humblest entreaties, can move you, yet let this last act of mine alone have some weight to lessen the force of your severity: consider how I put entire confidence in you, and intrusted you with my most secret designs, for without that you would never have had it in your power to revenge yourself of me, as you so much desired. Away, then, with all this fury, and pardon me this time; I am ready, if you will forgive me, and set me at liberty, to abandon that unworthy young man, and have you only for my lover and my lord. And though you make light of my beauty, esteeming it trifling and transitory, yet it is what other young gentlemen would love and value, and you do not think otherwise. And, notwithstanding this cruel treatment, I can never think you would wish to see me dash my brains out before your face, when I was once so agreeable to you. For Heaven's sake, therefore, show me some pity; the sun now waxes warm, and is as troublesome as the coldness of the night."

The scholar, who held her in talk only for his diversion, replied, "Madam, the confidence you reposed in me was out of no regard you had for me, but only to regain your lover; and you are mistaken if you think I had no other convenient way to come at my revenge: I had a thousand others, and had laid a thousand different snares to entrap you; so that, if this had not happened, I must necessarily have taken you in some other; nor was there any one but would have been attended with as much shame and punishment to you as this. I have made choice of it, therefore, not because you gave me the opportunity, but that I might gain my end the sooner.

And though they had all failed, yet had I my pen left, with which I would have so mauled you, that you should have wished a thousand times a day that you had never been born. The force of satire is much greater than they are sensible of, on whom it was never tried. I swear solemnly, then, that I would have written such things of you, that you should have pulled your very eyes out for vexation. As to the offer of your love, that is needless: let him take you, if he will, to whom you more properly belong, and whom I now love, for what he has done to you, as much as before I hated him. You women are all for young flighty fellows, without considering that those people are never content with one mistress, but are roving always from one to another, as you have found by experience. Their greatest happiness is in gaining favours from you, and their utmost glory is to publish them. Truly, you think your love is all a secret, and that nobody but your maid and I were ever acquainted with it, whilst his neighbourhood and yours both talked of nothing else; but it generally happens, that the persons concerned are the last that hear of such things. Therefore, if you have made a bad choice, keep to it, and leave me, whom you have despised, to another lady whom I have made choice of, one of more account than yourself, and who knows better how to distinguish people. As to my being concerned for your death, if you please, you may make the experiment. But, as I suppose you will scarcely humour me so far, so I now tell you, that if the sun begins to scorch, you may call to mind the cold you made me endure, and together they will make a proper temperature."

The disconsolate lady, seeing that all these words tended to some cruel purpose, began to weep again, and say, "Nay now, if nothing can move you to pity that concerns myself, yet let your love for that lady whom you say you have met with, who is wiser than I, and by whom you say you are beloved; let your regard, I say, for her, prevail upon you to forgive me, and to bring me my clothes, that I may dress myself, and go down." The scholar fell a laughing at this, and seeing that it was now about noon, he replied, "Truly, I know not how to say you nay, as you entreat me by that lady: then tell me where they are, and I will go for them, that you may come down." She was a little comforted at this, and directed him to the place where she had laid them; so he went away, and ordered his servant to keep strict watch that nobody came to her relief till his return; and in the

meantime, he went to a friend's house, where he dined, and laid himself down to sleep.

The lady, conceiving some vain hopes of being released, had sat herself down in the utmost agony, getting to that corner of the wall in which there was the most shade, where she continued, sometimes thinking, and then again lamenting; this moment in hopes, and the next altogether in despair of his return with her clothes. At last, musing on one thing after another, being quite spent with grief, and having had no rest the night before, she dropped asleep. The sun was now in the meridian, darting all its force directly upon her naked and most delicate body, as also upon her head, so that it not only scorched all the skin that lay exposed, but cleft it little by little into chinks, and blistered it to that degree that it made her awake; when, finding herself perfectly roasted, and offering to turn about, it all seemed to rend asunder like a piece of burnt parchment, that has been kept upon the stretch. Besides all this, her head ached to that degree as if it would rive in pieces, which was no wonder. Moreover, the reflection of the heat against her feet was so strong, that she could get no rest any where, but kept crying, and moving from place to place. And, as there was no wind, the flies and hornets were constantly buzzing about her, striking their stings into the chinks of her flesh, and covering her over with wounds, whilst it was her whole employment to beat them off, still cursing herself, her lover, and the scholar. Being thus harassed by the heat, by insects, by hunger, but much more by thirst, and pierced to the heart by a thousand bitter reflections, she got up to see if any body was near, resolving, whoever was within call, to beg their assistance; but even this comfort her ill fortune had denied her. The labourers were all gone out of the fields, on account of the heat, though it happened that nobody had been at work thereabouts all that day, being employed in threshing their corn at home, so that she heard nothing but the grasshoppers, and saw only the river Arno, which, by making her long for some of its water, instead of quenching, did but add to her thirst. She saw also pleasant groves, cool shades, and country-houses, which now made her trouble so much the greater.

What more can be said of this unhappy lady? She who the night before, could by the whiteness of her skin, dispel even the shade of night, was now all brown and spotted, so that she seemed the most unsightly creature that could be.

While she was thus void of all hope, and expecting nothing but death, towards the middle of the afternoon the scholar happened to awake, when he called her to mind, and returned to the tower, sending the servant back, who was yet fasting, to get his dinner. As soon as she saw him, all weak and miserable as she was, she came and placed herself down by the battlements, and said, "Oh, sir, you are most unreasonably revenged; for if I made you freeze almost with cold, one night in my court, you have roasted and burnt me for a whole day upon this tower, where I have been at death's door with hunger and thirst; I conjure you, therefore, to come up, and bestow that death upon me, which my heart will not let me inflict upon myself, and which I most earnestly long for, to put an end to that pain which I can no longer endure; or, if you deny me this favour, do, pray, send me up a little water to wash my mouth, my tears not being sufficient, such is the drought and scorching that I feel." The scholar was sensible by her manner of speaking, how weak she was; he perceived, also, by what he saw of her body, how it was scorched and blistered; for that reason, therefore, as well as her entreaties, he began to have a little compassion, but said, "Vile woman! thou shalt never meet with thy death from my hands; from thy own thou mayest if thou wilt; and just so much water will I give thee, as thou gavest me fire in my extremity. This only grieves me that, whilst I was forced to lie in dung for my recovery, thou, nevertheless, will be cured with the coldness of perfumed rose-water; and though I was near losing both limbs and life, yet thou, when stripped of thy skin, wilt appear with fresh beauty, like a serpent just uncased."—"Alas!" quoth the lady, "may only my enemies gain charms in that manner! But you, more cruel than any savage beast, how could you bear to torture me as you have done? What could I have expected worse from you, had I put all your relations to death in the cruelest manner imaginable? What greater punishment could be thought of for a traitor, who had been the destruction of a whole city, than to be roasted in the sun, and then devoured by flies? and not to give me so much as a drop of water, whilst the vilest malefactors, when they are about to suffer, are not denied even wine.—Now I see you fixed in your barbarous resolution, nor any way moved with what I have suffered, I shall wait patiently for my death. The Lord have mercy on me, and look with a just eye on what you have done!' With these words she

withdrew to the middle of the place, despairing of her life, and ready to faint away a thousand times with thirst, where she sat lamenting her condition.

It being now towards evening, the scholar, thinking she had suffered enough, made his servant take her clothes wrapped up in his cloak, and follow him to her house, where he found her maid sitting at the door, all sad and disconsolate for her mistress's long absence. "Pray, good woman," said he, "what has become of your mistress?"—"Sir," she replied, "I do not know; I thought to have found her in bed this morning, where I saw her last night, but she is neither to be found there, nor any where else, nor do I know what has become of her. But can you give me any tidings of her?"—"I wish only," quoth he, "that thou hadst been along with her, that I might have taken the same revenge o' thee that I have had of her. But depend upon it thou shalt never escape; I will so pay thee for what thou hast done, that thou shalt remember me every time thou shalt offer to put a trick upon any one." Then he said to the servant, "Give her the clothes, and tell her she may go for her mistress if she has a mind." The servant accordingly delivered them, with that message, and the girl, knowing them again, was afraid her mistress was murdered, and could scarcely help shrieking, nevertheless she made all the haste she could to the tower.

It happened that a labourer of the widow's had lost two of his hogs that day, and coming near to the tower, to look for them, just as the scholar was departed, he heard the complaints the poor creature was making, so he cried out, "Who makes that noise?" She immediately knew his voice, and called him by his name, saying, "Go, I pray, and desire my maid to come to me." The man then knew her, and said, "Alas! madam, who has brought you hither? Your maid has been looking for you all day long. But who could have thought of finding you in this place? Then he took the sides of the ladder, and placed them as they should be, binding them about with osiers: and as he was doing this, the maid came, and being able to hold her tongue no longer, she wrung her hands, and fell a roaring out, "Dear madam, O, where are you?" Her mistress hearing her, replied, as well as she could, "Good girl, never stand crying, but make haste, and bring me my clothes." Comforted by the sound of her mistress's voice, the maid jumped upon the ladder before it was made quite secure, and by

the man's help got upon the tower, when, seeing her lie naked there, burnt like a log of wood, and quite spent, she cried over her, as if she had been dead. But the lady desired her to be quiet, and dress her; and understanding from her that nobody knew where she was, but the persons who had brought the clothes to her, and the labourer that was below, she was a little comforted, and begged earnestly of them to keep the secret. The labourer now took her upon his back, as she had no strength to walk, and brought her down safely in that manner; whilst the girl, following after with less caution than was necessary, slipped her foot, and falling down the ladder, broke her thigh, which occasioned her to make a most grievous outcry. The man, after he had set his lady on the grass, went to see what was the matter with the maid, and finding that she had her thigh broke, he laid her down by the lady, who, seeing this addition to her misfortunes, and that the person from whom she expected most succour was disabled, began to lament afresh, and the man, unable to pacify her, fell a weeping likewise. It was now sunset, and rather than let her lie there till night, as the disconsolate lady would have wished, he took her to his own house, and brought two of his brothers and his wife back with him for the maid, whom they carried upon a table. Having given the lady some water to refresh her, and used all the kind comfortable words they could think of, the labourer carried her to his own chamber, and his wife gave her a little bread soaked in water, and undressed and put her to bed. It was then contrived that they should both be taken to Florence that night, and so they were.

On her return home, the lady, who was never at a loss for invention, cooked up an artful story, which was believed by her brothers and sisters, and almost every one else, viz., that it was all done by enchantment. Physicians were sent for, who, with a great deal of pain and trouble to her, and not without the loss of her whole skin several times over, cured her of a violent fever, and other accidents attending it; and they also set the girl's broken thigh. From that time Helena forgot her lover, and was more careful for the future, both in choosing a spark, and in making her sport. The scholar, also, hearing what had happened to the girl, thought he had had full revenge, and so no more was said about it. Thus the foolish lady was served for her wit and mockery, thinking to make a jest of a scholar, as if he had been a common

person, never considering that most of them, I do not say all, have the devil, as they say, in a string. Then take care, ladies, how you play your tricks, but especially upon scholars.

[We are informed by some of the commentators on Boccaccio that the circumstances related in this story happened to the author himself, and that the widow is the same with the one introduced in his 'Laberinto d'Amore.' The unusual minuteness with which the tale is related gives some countenance to such an opinion. However this may be, it has evidently suggested the story in the 'Diable Boiteux,' of Patrice, whose mistress, Lucila, makes him remain a whole night in the street before her windows, on the false pretence that her brother, Don Gaspard, is in the house, and that her lover must wait till he departs.]

NOVEL VIII.

Two neighbours are very intimate together, when one making very free with the other's wife, the other finds it out, and returns the compliment, whilst the friend is locked up in a chest all the time.

The lady's sufferings seemed grievous to all who heard them; though their pity for her was the less, as they judged that she had in some measure deserved them; whilst the scholar was deemed most rigidly obstinate, and even cruel. But Pampinea having made an end, the queen ordered Fiammetta to go on, who spoke as follows:—As I suppose you have been under some concern for the scholar's severity, it may be proper, I believe, to revive your drooping spirits with some more cheerful subject. Therefore I shall tell you a story of a certain young man, who received an injury with more mildness than he, and returned it with more moderation. Whence you may learn, that a person ought to be content if he gives people as good as they bring, without desiring an unreasonable vengeance, and far beyond what the provocation which he may have received requires.

Know, then, that at Siena lived, as I have been told, two wealthy young citizens, the one named Spinelloccio Tanena, and the other Zeppa di Mino, near neighbours to each other, and as intimate together as if they had been brothers, and each had a very handsome wife. Now it happened that Spinelloccio, going often to the other's house, whether he was at home or not, became too familiar at last with his wife, which continued some time before anybody perceived it.

But Zeppa being at home one day, without her knowing it, Spinelloccio came to enquire for him, and being told by her that he was gone abroad, he began to make free with her as usual. This Zeppa was a witness to, and greatly troubled at; yet knowing that making a clamour would no way lessen the injury, but rather add to his shame, he began to think of some revenge, which should make no noise abroad, and with which he should yet be content.

Resolving at length what to do, he went into the room after the friend was gone away, when he found his wife setting her head-dress a little to rights, and he said, "What are you doing, madam?" She replied, "Do you not see?"—"Yes, truly," quoth he, "and I have seen a great deal more than I could have wished." So he charged her with the thing, and she came to an open confession, as it was in vain to deny it, and began to weep and beg his pardon. He then said to her, "You see you have been guilty of a very great crime; if you expect forgiveness from me, you must resolve to do what I shall enjoin you, which is to tell Spinelloccio that about the third hour to-morrow he must find some pretence for leaving me to go to you, when I will return home; and as soon as you hear me, do you make him go into that chest, and lock him up, and after you have done this, I will tell you the rest. Have no doubt, however, about it, for I promise you I will do him no harm." She agreed to do so, and kept her word.

The next day, the two friends being together, Spinelloccio, who had promised the lady to be with her then, said to Zeppa, "I am engaged to go and dine with a friend, whom I would not have wait for me: so fare you well." "It is a long while till dinner yet," said Zeppa.—"Yes," replied the other, "but we have business to confer about, which requires me to be there in good time." So he left him, took a little circuit, and went to the lady. No sooner were they shut in together in the chamber than Zeppa returned; when she, seeming to be very much frightened, made Spinelloccio go into the chest, as the husband had directed, locked him up, and then came out to her husband, who asked her whether dinner was ready. "It will be very soon," she replied,—"Then," said he, "as Spinelloccio has gone to dine with a friend, and has left his wife at home by herself, go and call to her out of the window, to come and dine with us." The lady whose fear for herself had rendered her very obedient, did as she was desired, and Spinelloccio's wife came, after much

entreaty, hearing that her husband was not to dine at home. Zeppa shewed the greatest fondness towards her imaginable, and making a sign for his wife to go into the kitchen, he took her familiarly by the hand, led her into the chamber, and locked the door. Upon this she began to say, "Oh, Zeppa, what means this? Is this what you invited me for? Is this the regard you have for your friend Spinelloccio?" Zeppa having got her up to the chest where her husband was shut in, and holding her fast, replied, "Madam, before you utter any complaints, hear what I am going to tell you: I have loved your husband, and still love him, as a brother; and what has come of the trust I reposed in him? Yesterday I found out, though he knows nothing of it, that he is as intimate with my wife as he is with you. Now I respect him so much, that I intend to take no other revenge than simple retaliation. He has had my wife, and I mean to have you. If you will not consent to this, be assured I shall revenge myself in such a manner, that both he and you shall have cause to repent it." Then, in reply to the lady's remonstrances, he entered into such details as convinced her of the truth of what he alleged.—"Well, Zeppa," she said, at last, "since your revenge is to fall upon me, I must be content. Only make my peace with your wife for what we are going to do, in like manner as I am ready to forgive her."—"Be assured I will do that," he said, "and moreover I will make you a present also of as fine a jewel as you could wish to have." So saying he fell to kissing her; and laying her down on the chest in which her husband was locked up, he took his fill of revenge, and so did she too on her own account.

Spinelloccio, hearing what passed, was fit to burst with vexation; and had it not been that he was prevented by the fear of Zeppa's anger, he would have roared out, and abused his wife, even shut up as he was. But considering again that he had given the provocation, and that Zeppa had reason for what he had done, and had behaved humanely and like a friend, he resolved to respect him more than ever.

When Zeppa had received full satisfaction from the lady, he got up from the chest. She asked for the jewel which he had promised, whereupon he went to the door and called his wife, who coming in with a smile said only this to her, "Madam, you have given me tit for tat." Then said Zeppa, "Here, open this chest." She did so, and he showed Spinelloccio to his wife. Now it would be difficult to say which

of the two was the more confounded: the man at seeing his friend, and knowing that he was privy to what he had done, or the woman at seeing her husband, and being conscious that he must have heard and felt what she had done over his head. "Behold," added Zeppa, "this is the jewel; I now give it you." Spinelloccio hereupon came out of the chest, and said, "Well, now we are even; and, as you said before to my wife, it is best for us to continue friends:" Zeppa was content; so they all four sat down to dinner together in the greatest peace and harmony; and from that day forth each of the wives had two husbands, and each of the husbands two wives, without the least dispute or grudge ever arising between them on that account.

[This story is in the 'Seven Wise Masters,' of Hebers, but was probably suggested to Boccaccio by the latter part of the Fabliau, 'Constant du Hamel' (Le Grand, iv, 226). There, a priest, a provost, and a forester, attempt to seduce a peasant's wife. The husband has thus a triple vengeance to execute. But, in the Fabliau, this was an ungrateful return to the wife, who had not yielded to the solicitations of her lovers, but had contrived to coop them up successively in a tun which held feathers. The Fabliau, again, probably derived its origin from some oriental tale. In the story of Arruya, in the 'Persian Tales,' a lady solicited by a cadi, a doctor, and a governor, exposes them to each other. To Persia the story has probably come from the Brahmins, as there is a similar incident in the 'Bahar Danush,' which is founded on their traditions. Boccaccio's tale is introduced in La Fontaine's 'Le Faiseur d'oreilles et le racommodeur de moules.']

NOVEL IX.

Master Simon, the doctor, is imposed upon by Bruno and Buffalmacco, and made to believe that he is to be one of the company of rovers, and afterwards they leave him in a ditch.

THE community of wives, mentioned in the last novel, occasioned a good deal of discourse, when the queen, knowing it was her turn, began in this manner:—Well did Spinelloccio deserve what he met with from his friend Zeppa; and I think they are not to blame who put jests upon people of their own seeking, and such as they have really merited, though Pampinea was of a different opinion. Now as to Spinelloccio, what he got was no more than his due; but I purpose to speak of another, who would needs seek after it,

and I commend those merry fellows for what they did. This then was a certain doctor of physic, who returned from Bologna to Florence, strutting in the robes belonging to his profession, though an ass would have become them as well as he.

Every day we see our townsmen, after they have been to study at Bologna, come back, one a lawyer, another a physician, a third a notary, with their long scarlet gowns and furs, with other mighty fine things; and to what purpose every day's experience shows us. Amongst the rest was one Master Simon da Villa, more rich in estate than learning, who appeared in his scarlet robes and ermine, calling himself a doctor of physic, and took a house in the Via del Cocomoro. Now, this Master Simon, amongst his other notable qualities, had one which was to inquire who every person was that he saw in the street, and, as though he was to have compounded his medicines according to the different gestures and manners of people, he observed and noted all. But he had cast his eye more particularly upon two painters of whom we have twice heard mention to-day,—Bruno and Buffalmacco, who were always together, and lived in his neighbourhood. Noticing that they let the world wag more carelessly than other people, and were always more cheerful, he asked a great number of persons about them. Being told then by every one that they were both poor men, and painters, he could not conceive how they could possibly live so merrily in their poverty, but supposed, as they were cunning fellows, that they must have some secret way of getting money. He had a mind therefore to become acquainted with one or both of them, and so he happened to fall in with Bruno, who, soon seeing to the bottom of him, made the merest game of him that could be, whilst the doctor was always wonderfully delighted to hear him talk. Having invited him several times to dinner, and thinking upon that account that he might discourse the more freely with him, he expressed, at length, his great wonder how he and Buffalmacco, who were both poor, could yet be so cheerful, and desired to know how they managed in that case. Bruno could not help laughing to himself, to hear the doctor put such a simple question, and resolved to give him a suitable answer.

"There are many people, master," he said, "that I would never tell that to, but as you are a friend, and I know will keep it secret, I shall be less scrupulous with you. It is true

we live as merrily as you imagine, or perhaps more so, and yet all we earn or possess will hardly find us salt to our broth, and I hope you do not think we steal: no, we go a roving, and bring home with us every thing we can desire; and thus it comes to pass that we live so merrily as you observe." The doctor wondered what this going a roving could mean, and desired he would inform him, assuring him that he would never reveal the secret. "Alas, Master Doctor," quoth the other, "what a request is this! It is too great a secret, and I shall be ruined if I disclose it."—"You may depend upon what I say," quoth the doctor, "it shall never go farther for me." Bruno then, after making abundance of excuses, said, "Behold, master, the regard I have for your superexcellent understanding, and the confidence I repose in you is such, that I can deny you nothing; therefore I will tell you, if you will swear to me, as you have just now promised, never to reveal it." The doctor swore, and swore again.

"You must know then, my dear master," quoth he, "that there was lately a necromancer in this city called Mr. Michael Scotus, because he was a scotchman, who had great honour shown him by many of the gentry, few of whom are now living; and he, being about to quit this place, at their request left it in charge with two of his disciples, that they should always be ready to serve those people who had honoured him. Some, therefore, they obliged in their love-affairs, and some in other matters. At last, being taken with the city, and the manners of the people, they resolved to make it their place of residence, when they contracted a friendship with divers persons, such as were agreeable to their own tempers, without considering whether those people were rich or poor at that time: and to please those friends they established a new society of five and twenty persons, who were to meet in some place that was fixed upon by them, twice at least in each month, when every one was to say what he wanted, and they supplied him with it that very night. Now my friend and I, as a particular mark of favour to us, were admitted into this society. And it is wonderful to behold the costly furniture in the room where we sit, the tables spread in the most royal manner, with the great number of goodly servants, both men and women, at every one's command; the basins, flagons, and cups also both of gold and silver, out of which we eat and drink, and the great variety and plenty of victuals which are set before us. It is impossible for me to tell you what different musical

instruments there are, and the delightful melody that we hear; or what numbers of wax candles are burnt at one of these feasts, any more than the immense quantities of sweetmeats consumed, and the very rich wines which are drunk. Now, I would not have you suppose, my dear friend, that we appear in the same dress that you behold. No, there is not one of us that seems less than an Emperor, so richly are we attired.

"But of all our pleasures, that of having the ladies' company is the greatest, and they are brought to us, according to every one's desire, from all quarters of the world. There you may see the great lady of Barbanicchia, the Queen of Baschia, the wife of the great Sultan, the Empress of Osbech, the Ciancianfera of Norvecca, the Semistante of Berlinzone, and the Scalpedra of Narsia. But what need have I to recount so many? There are all the queens in the world, even to Prester John's lady. Then observe now: after we have eaten and drunk, and taken a dance or two, every one selects that particular lady whom he had desired should be sent for: and you must know that the chambers we retire to are a perfect paradise, and no less odoriferous than a perfumer's shop; the beds also that we lie in, are as beautiful as the very best that belongs to the duke of Venice. You may judge then of our happiness. But none seem to fare better at these times than my friend and I; for he generally has the queen of France, and I have the queen of England, who are the two most beautiful ladies in the whole world, and they like no other persons as well as us. Imagine, therefore, if we have not reason to be merry more than other people; for, besides having the affection of two such queens, if we want a thousand or two thousand florins at any time, they immediately supply us. And this we call going a roving; for as the corsairs rob and plunder every one they meet, so do we, with this difference only, that they make no restitution, which we do as soon as the money has served our purpose. Thus I have told you, master, what we mean by going a roving; you may easily see how great a secret it is, and so I need say no more to you upon that head."

The doctor, whose knowledge reached no further, perhaps, than to cure children of the itch, gave the same credit to this story as he would have done to the most established truth, and became as desirous of being admitted into this society, as he could have been of anything in the world: so he told Bruno, that he did not wonder to see him so cheer-

ful, and could scarcely refrain from asking the favour of being accepted among them, deferring it only till he could do it with a better grace. From that time, therefore, he was continually inviting him to dine and sup; and their intimacy was such, that the doctor scarcely knew how to live without him. Not to seem ungrateful for these favours, Bruno painted in his hall the whole story of Lent, and an Agnus Dei over his chamber-door, and a urinal over the door to the street, that people who wanted his advice might know where to have it. He painted also, in a little gallery, the battle of the cats and the rats, which the doctor thought a pretty fancy. And some nights, when he happened to sup elsewhere, he would say at his return, "I was last night at our meeting, when, being displeased with the Queen of England, I ordered the Gumedra of the great Cham of Tartary, to be brought me."—"Pray, what does that word mean?" quoth the doctor; "I do not understand such names."—"I do not wonder at that," said Bruno; "for Porcograsso and Vannacena take no notice of them."—"You mean," quoth the doctor, "Ipocrasso and Avicenna."—"Very likely; but I know as little of those names as you know of mine. Gumedra means the same thing in the grand Cham's language as Empress! O! you would think her a fine woman; she would soon make you forget all your recipes and your plasters."

Talking frequently in this manner, to excite him the more, and the doctor thinking, one night as he held the candle for him whilst he was painting, that he was now under sufficient obligations to grant any favour he should desire, he resolved to open his mind, as they were alone. "Bruno," he said, "there is nobody that I value so much as yourself; nor is there anything you could ask, but what I should be ready to oblige you in; then be not surprised at my making one request to you. You know not long since, you were telling me of your meetings; now there is nothing I desire so much as to make one amongst you, and for a very good reason; for I will bring the prettiest girl into your company that you have seen a long time, to whom I have devoted my entire love, and you must know I once offered her ten pieces, and she refused them. Tell me then, I pray you, what I must do to be admitted, and do you take care that I be so, and I promise that you shall always find me your true and trusty friend. You may observe what a good-looking man I am, how well I am set up on my legs; my face is like a rose, and I am a

doctor of physic too, and perhaps you have none of that profession among you; moreover I know a great many pretty things, and can sing divers pretty songs, as you shall hear." Then he began one, whilst Bruno had much ado to keep his countenance, and after he had done, he asked him what he thought of it. "Most certainly," replied he, "the best violin is no way comparable." "Then," quoth the doctor, "to this and many other qualifications, too tedious to relate at present, I may add, that my father was a gentleman, though he lived in a country village, and my mother of the Vallecchio family. Besides, there is no physician in Florence has better clothes, or more complete library than myself; and I give you my word, that if you be sick at any time, I will cure you for nothing." Bruno, to make him believe that he was more intent upon his painting, replied, "Pray, sir, snuff the candle, and let me finish this rat's tail, and then I will talk with you."

When the tail was finished, he put on a look as if the doctor's request had much perplexed him, and said, "Oh, sir, I have received great favours from you, and I know it; but this thing you require of me is a most serious matter. There is nobody that I would serve sooner that yourself, but indeed you ask more than lies within my power. But though I cannot directly oblige you in what you desire, yet if you would keep it a profound secret, I could put you into a method whereby I am very sure you will succeed."—"Then tell me," quoth the doctor; "you do not know how well I can keep a secret; Signor Guasparruolo da Saliceto, when he was a judge, intrusted me with many things."—"Well," quoth Bruno, "if he trusted you, I may do it more securely. The means you are to use are as follows: we have a captain and two counsellors, who are chosen every six months; and next Christmas Buffalmacco will certainly be the captain, and I one of the counsellors. Now it is in the captain's power to admit you, if he pleases, therefore you should immediately get acquainted with him. I know he will be very fond of you, as he is of all men of understanding; and after you have been often in his company, and ingratiated yourself with him, you may then ask the favour, and he will not know how to refuse you. I have given him a good account of you already, and he has conceived a great regard for you; and when you have done as I said, you may leave the rest to me."—"You say well," quoth the doctor, "if he delights in people of sense and learning, he will not miss of his aim: I

have enough of both to furnish a whole city, and yet leave sufficient for myself."

When the matter was thus arranged, Bruno went and related the whole to Buffalmacco, who thought it an age till he could let the doctor have what he sought for. On the other hand, the doctor, who was so eager to be a rover, found it no hard matter to get acquainted with him; and he began to treat the two friends, both noon and night, with everything that was nice and dainty, so that they lived entirely upon him; telling him, at the same time, that it was a favour they would show to nobody else. At length, when he thought it a fit time, he made the same request to Buffalmacco that he had done before to Bruno, whereat the former seemed much incensed, and made a great clamour at his friend, threatening to break his head for betraying those secrets to the doctor. But the doctor did all he could to excuse him, protesting that he had it from another person.

On this, Buffalmacco seemed a little more pacified, and said, "Dear doctor, I plainly see you have been at the university, and know how to keep your mouth shut upon occasion; and I farther tell you, that you have not learned your A, B, C, in the manner most blockheads do: moreover, if I am not mistaken, you were born on a Sunday; and though Bruno tells me that your study has been physic, yet to me it seems as if you had learned to captivate men, which you do by your great sense, and manner of speaking, far beyond any that I ever heard." Here the doctor interrupted him, and said, turning to Bruno, "This it is to have to do with people of understanding; there are few persons that could have penetrated into the depth of my designs so easily as this worthy man has done. You did not take my meaning half so soon; but let him know what I said upon your telling me that he delighted in people of sense. Do not you think I spoke truth at that time?" "No doubt," replied the other. Then said he to Buffalmacco, "What would you have said, had you seen me at Bologna, where were none, either great or small, doctor or scholar, but doated on me, so much did they profit by my wise discourses? Nay, more than that, I never spoke but they all laughed, so highly were they pleased to hear me. And when I came away, they expressed the greatest concern imaginable at parting with me, and to encourage me to continue with them, offered me the sole privilege of reading lectures on medicine to all the students. But I refused it, being resolved to come and live here upon my estate, which

is very considerable."—"Well," said Bruno to his friend, "what think you now? You would not believe me when I told you that there was not a physician in all this country could cast an ass's water better than himself; nor is there his fellow, I will maintain it, from this place to Paris. Now, try your best, and see if you can deny him anything."—"Bruno is quite in the right," quoth the doctor; "but here nobody knows me; they are all a parcel of ignorant, stupid people; but I wish you had seen how I appeared among the doctors."—"Indeed, master doctor," quoth Buffalmacco, "you know a great deal more than I could have thought; in which respect, speaking to you as becomes me to a person of your understanding and parts, I dare assure you that you shall be one of our society." This promise made him increase his favours towards them, and they were extremely diverted with his great simplicity, promising that he should have the Countess di Civillari* for his mistress, who was the goodliest and sweetest creature in the whole world. The doctor asked what countess this was. "O," quoth Buffalmacco, "she is a very great lady, and there are few houses but where she has some jurisdiction. Her officers are all about, and store of her great barons are to be seen everywhere, namely, Tamagnin† della Porta, Don Meta, Manico di Scopa, and the rest, whose names have escaped me. You shall leave your old mistress, then, for this lady, of whom we will give you the full possession."

Now the doctor, who had been brought up at Bologna, understood not the meaning of these Florentine terms, and so was pleased with the hopes of enjoying what they had promised him. In a little time they brought him the news of his being admitted. The day, therefore, that they were to have their meeting, he had them both to dine with him, and after dinner he asked them in what manner he had best go to this assembly. Buffalmacco replied, "It behoves you, master, to proceed resolutely, otherwise you may receive an impediment, and do us great injury. Now you shall hear in what manner I would have you do so. You must contrive to be upon one of those raised tombs in the new St. Maria's church-yard, at the time of the people's going to sleep, with your best gown on, in order to make a figure amongst us at your first appearance, and to verify our character of you to the countess, who intends to make you a knight of the bath,

* This means no more than a common jakes.

† These are all different words for the same thing.

at her own expense. There you must wait till we send for you. And, that you may be apprised of everything, I must acquaint you that there will be a black-horned beast, of no great stature, come for you, capering and dancing about to terrify you; but, after he finds you are not to be daunted, he will gently come near you, when you may descend from the tomb, and, without thinking of heaven, or any of the saints, mount boldly upon his back, and, as soon as you shall be seated, lay your hands upon your breast, without touching him: he will then move easily along and bring you to us; but if you mention anything of a prayer, or express the least fear, he will throw you down into some noisome place or other; so that you had better not attempt it, unless you can depend upon your own courage; for you may do us a great deal of mischief, and yourself no good."

"You do not know me yet," said the doctor; "because I wear a gown you think me faint-hearted. If you did but know what I have done some nights at Bologna, when I went with some of my companions to visit the girls there, you would be surprised. One night, I assure you, I met with a little young baggage, who refused to go along with us, when I dragged her by force a considerable way, and afterwards she went willingly enough. Another time, I remember, having nobody with me but my boy, that I went through the friar's church-yard, after evening prayers, though a woman had been buried there that night, and was not at all afraid. Never fear, therefore, but I will be as courageous and resolute as you can desire. To do you the greater honour, too, I intend to go in the scarlet robes in which I commenced doctor, and you will see what joy there will be in your assembly at my coming, and if I shall not go near to be immediately declared your captain. You shall see also how the case will go after I have made my appearance, in regard to the countess, who, having as yet never seen me, is so enamoured with me, that she will make me a knight of the bath; and as to supporting the honour, that you may leave to me."—"Very well spoken," said Buffalmacco; "but take care you do not impose upon us, and so not come at all, or be not found there when we send for you; and I give you this caution because the weather is cold, and you doctors love to take care of yourselves."—"No," quoth the doctor, "I am one of those hardy ones that have no regard for the weather, and if I have occasion to rise in the night, I only

put a fur gown over my doublet; so you need make no doubt about it."

As soon as they were departed, and it was night, he made some excuse or other to his wife, and got away his best gown, which he put on when he thought it was the time, and went and stood upon one of the grave-stones, it being a very cold night, expecting the beast; whilst Buffalmacco, who was pretty lusty, had procured a mask, such as they used formerly in farces, and covered himself with a black fur gown, which was turned inside out, so that he seemed like a bear, only that as his mask had two horns, he had more the appearance of the devil. Thus equipped, he went to the square by new St. Maria's, Bruno following at a distance, to see how things went on. As soon as Buffalmacco found that his doctor was there, he fell a skipping about, and roaring as if he were mad, which put our physician into a most terrible fright, and he began to wish heartily that he was safe at home again. But as he was come out upon this affair, he resolved to go through with it, so urgent was his desire to behold the wonders which they had been relating to him. At last, after Buffalmacco had played his tricks for some time, he grew a little more quiet, and drew near to the stone where the doctor stood keeping himself well out of harm's way. He shook all over for fear, and was in doubt for some time whether he should mount or not; till, apprehending that some mischief might befall him if he did not, this latter fear expelled the former, and coming down from the tomb, he mounted upon the beast, praying God to help him, and laid his hands upon his breast, as he had been directed.

Buffalmacco then began to shape his course towards St. Maria della Scala, and thence carried the doctor, groping all the way in the dark, as far as the ladies of Ripole. Hereabouts were divers ditches, made by the husbandmen, to empty the Countess di Civillari into, for the sake of manuring their lands afterwards. Buffalmacco then, being come to the brink of one of them, and putting his hand under one of the doctor's feet, pitched him headlong in; and then, after making a terrible noise, stamping and roaring about, he went back by St. Maria della Scala, towards Prato d'Ogni Santi, where he met with Bruno, who had been forced to leave him, because he could not hold from laughing; and both turned back once more, to see how the poor doctor would behave in that condition. The unlucky candidate for admission to the company of Rovers, finding himself in

such a place, laboured with all his might to get released; but falling sometimes on one side, and sometimes on the other, he was besmeared all over, till at length, with the utmost difficulty, he made shift to scramble out with the loss of his hood. Then he cleaned himself as well as he could, and not knowing what other course to take, he went home, and knocked at the door till they let him in. The door was no sooner shut again, than Bruno and Buffalmacco were there listening, to hear what a reception the doctor would meet with from his wife, who fell upon him with all the bad language she could devise, saying, "You are in a fine condition, truly!—What, you have been with some other woman, and so had a mind to make a figure in your scarlet robes!—Am not I enough for you? I wish you had been choked when you fell into all that nastiness. Here is a fine physician, indeed! who is not content with his own wife, but must be running out at night after other women." With these and such like words she rated him till midnight, when she had him washed and made clean.

The next morning Bruno and Buffalmacco came to his house with their bodies all painted over with blue spots, as if they had been beaten, when they found him just risen out of bed, and everything in a sad condition. Seeing them coming, he went and wished them a good morning; but they appeared to be much out of temper, and replied, "We wish you had been hanged for a sorry man as you are; we have been near losing our lives, meaning to do you honour, being beaten like two asses, and in danger of being excluded our assembly, where we would have had you introduced. If you will not believe us, behold our bodies;" so taking him into a corner, where there was not much light, they just opened their bosoms for him to see, and immediately buttoned them up again. The doctor endeavoured to excuse himself, and was telling them of his misfortunes, and where he had been thrown; when Buffalmacco blurted out, "I wish you had been thrown from the bridge into the river; what had you to do with prayers? Were not you told of that beforehand?" —"Indeed," quoth he, "I used no prayers."—"How do you say! no prayers!" answered the others; "I am sure our messenger told us, that you prayed, and trembled like an aspen leaf. We will never be served so again, either by you or any one else; nor must you expect ever any more to have such favour showed you." The doctor now began to ask pardon, entreating them not to be angry; and, lest they

should expose him, by making the affair public, he entertained them at his house more than ever. And thus our doctor was taught something more than he had learned at Bologna.

NOVEL X.

A certain Sicilian damsel cheats a merchant of all the money he had taken for his goods at Palermo. Afterwards he pretends to return with a greater stock of goods than before; when he contrives to borrow a large sum of money of her, leaving sham pledges for her security.

How much they were all diverted with the queen's novel, it is needless to say; and it being now ended, Dioneo began in this manner:—It is certain that a hoax is the more entertaining, the more cunning and artful the person is who is imposed upon by it. Therefore, though the other novels have been agreeable enough, yet I think to relate one that will please you better; inasmuch as the lady outwitted was a greater mistress of such devices, than any of the persons before mentioned.

It was formerly a custom, and may be still, in seaport towns, for all the merchants that come thither, to bring their goods into a common warehouse, under the keeping of the community, or the lord of the town; when they give a particular account, in writing, of the nature and value of them; the goods are kept under lock and key, and the account entered in a register, for the merchants to pay the accustomed dues, as all or part are sold, and delivered out of the warehouse. From this register, the brokers are informed both of the quantity and quality of the goods, and also who are the owners to treat with for them, either by exchange, truck, or sale. This was the way, among other places, at Palermo, where there was likewise, and is still, great plenty of handsome women, not overstocked with modesty. And yet, to all appearance, many of them were grand ladies, and pretended to a character, though they make it their whole employ to shave and even skin such men as fell into their clutches. No sooner did they see a strange merchant, but they would inform themselves, from that register, of the nature and the value of his goods; and then, by their amorous wiles, they would endeavour to bring him to their lure, which they often did; and some have been choused out of part of their

goods; others have lost ship, goods, and body, to boot: so finely have they been handled by these cunning shavers.

Now it happened, not long since, that a certain young Florentine, called Niccola da Cigniano, though more commonly known by the nick-name Salabaetto, arrived there as a factor, with as much woollen cloth which had been left unsold at the fair of Salerno as might be worth five hundred florins; and having given in his account to the officers, and laid his goods safely up in the warehouse, he was in no great haste to despatch his business, but took a turn up and down the town to amuse himself. Being a personable young man, one of these female shavers, that we have been speaking of, called Madam Jiancofiore, having heard something of his affairs, soon took notice of him, which he perceiving, and supposing she was some great lady who had taken a fancy to him, resolved to conduct the affair with the utmost caution; so without saying a word to any one, he used to take his walks frequently by her house. She was soon sensible of this, and when she thought his affection towards her fully secured, under pretence of languishing for him, she sent one of her women to him, an adept in that sort of business, who told him, with tears in her eyes, that her lady was so in love with him, that she could get no rest night or day; therefore she desired very much, whenever he would do her that favour, to meet him at a bagnio; and with these words she took a ring out of a purse, and gave it him as a token. Salabaetto was overjoyed at the message; so taking the ring, and looking earnestly at it, and kissing it, he put it upon his finger, and said, "If your lady loves me as you say, be assured she has not misplaced her affections, for I love her more than I do mine own life, and shall be ready to meet her at any time and place she shall appoint." She had no sooner reported his answer, than she was posted back to tell him, that her mistress would meet him at such a bagnio that evening. Accordingly, he went thither at the time fixed, and found it engaged for that lady's use.

He had not waited long before two women slaves came, the one loaded with a fine cotton mattress, and the other a hamper full of things. This mattress they laid upon a bed in one of the chambers, covering it with a fine pair of sheets, curiously edged with silk, and over the whole was spread a rich Grecian counterpoint, with two pillows, worked in a most delicate manner; after which they went into the bath, and cleaned it very carefully. The lady now came, attended by

two slaves, and after some sighs and embraces, she said, "My dear Tuscan, there is nobody could have obtained this favour from me but yourself;" so they went into the bath together, and with them two of their slaves, who washed them with soap, scented with musk and gilliflowers. The other slaves then brought two fine sheets, smelling of nothing but roses, in one of which they wrapped Salabaetto, and in the other the lady, and carried them to bed, where after they had lain some time to perspire, those sheets were taken away, and they were left between the others. After this, they took out of the hamper silver canisters of rose, orange, and jessamine water, which they sprinkled upon the bed, and presented them with sweetmeats and rich wines, by way of collation: and he all the time thinking himself in paradise, wishing heartily that they would go away, and leave him in possession of his mistress. At length they left a taper lighting in the chamber, and departed. After they had lain a convenient time, the servants returned, and put on their clothes, and when they had taken more refreshment of wine and sweetmeats, and washed their hands and faces with orange-water, as they were going to depart, she said, "If it be agreeable to you, I should be vastly pleased if you would come and sup with me, and stay all night." Supposing himself as dear to her as her own heart, he replied, "Madam, whatever is pleasing to you is entirely so to me; now, therefore, and at all times, I shall be ready to obey your commands."

So she went home, had her apartment richly set out, and provided a costly supper for him. Salabaetto accordingly went thither as soon as it was dark, and was very elegantly received; and after supper they went into a chamber, scented with costly odours, where was a most noble bed, and everything besides that was grand and sumptuous. All this made him conclude, that she was some very great and rich lady. And though he had heard various reports about her, yet he would not believe them for the world; nay, had he been convinced of her tricking other people, he could never have been made to believe that she would serve him so. He stayed with her all that night, and the next morning she made him a present of a fine wrought belt and purse, saying to him, "My dear Salabaetto, fare you well; and from henceforth be persuaded, as you are entirely after my own heart, that my person and all I possess are at your service." He

then took his leave with great satisfaction, and went to the place where the merchants usually resort."

Continuing his visits to her without any expense, and becoming every day more enamoured, it happened, that he sold his cloth, and gained considerable profit. She was immediately apprised of this, not by himself, but by others, and as he was with her one night, she seemed to express a more than ordinary fondness for him, and would needs make him a present of two beautiful silver cups, worth about thirty florins, which he refused to accept, having had divers things of her before, to the value of thirty more, without giving her the worth of a single farthing. At last, after she had set him all on fire, as it were, with this extraordinary love and liberality, she was called out by one of her slaves, as she had contrived beforehand. She returned in a little time full of tears, and throwing herself down upon the bed, appeared to grieve most immoderately. Salabaetto was in the greatest consternation, and taking her in his arms, he began to say, "Alas, my dear heart, what is it that has happened to you thus suddenly? Tell me, my life, I entreat you, do." At last she replied, "My dear lord, I know neither what to do, nor what to say. I have just received letters from Messina, wherein my brother informs me, that, though I pawn all I have, I must, without fail, remit a thousand florins of gold in eight days; otherwise, he must inevitably lose his head. Now I find it impossible to raise the money upon so short a notice: had I but fifteen days, I could procure it from a place whence I could command even a greater sum; or I could sell some of my lands: but as it cannot now be done, I wish I had been in my grave rather than have lived to know this trouble;" and she continued weeping.

Salabaetto, whose love had taken away his understanding, thinking that her tears were real, and what she said was true, made answer, "Madam, I am unable to furnish you with a thousand; but with five hundred I can, as you think you will be able to pay me in fifteen days; and it is your good fortune that I happened to sell my cloth yesterday, otherwise I could not have spared you one farthing."—"Alas," quoth the lady, then have you been in want of money? Why did not you speak to me? For though I have not a thousand, I have always a hundred or two to spare for you. You deprive me of the assurance to accept your proffered favour." He, quite captivated with these fine speeches, made answer, "Madam, you shall have it nevertheless; had I been in the like circum-

stance I should have applied to you."—"Dear sir!" she replied, "I am convinced of your most constant and entire love towards me, to supply me with such a sum of your own accord: I was yours before, and now am much more so; nor shall I ever forget that it is to you I am indebted for my brother's life. But Heaven knows I accept it very unwillingly, considering that you are a merchant, and must have occasion for a great deal of ready money; but being constrained by necessity, and assured also that I shall be able to return it at your time, I will make use of it; and I will pawn all my houses rather than fail in my engagement to you." With these words she fell, weeping, into his arms. He did all he could to comfort her, and stayed with her all that night; and the next morning, to show what a liberal lover he was, and without waiting for any farther request, he brought her the five hundred florins, which she received with laughter at her heart, though with tears in her eyes, he looking only to her simple promise.

But after she had got the money, the times were soon changed; and whereas before he had free admittance to her as often as he pleased, now reasons were given that he could not get a sight of her once in seven times that he went; nor did he meet with those smiles and caresses, nor with the same generous reception as before. Moreover, the time limited was past, and one or two months over, and when he demanded his money he could get nothing but words by way of payment. His eyes were now opened to the arts of this wicked woman, as well as his own want of sense; but knowing that he had no proof against her, save what she herself would please to acknowledge, there being no writing of any kind between them, he was ashamed to make his complaint to any one, also on account of the disgrace which he must undergo for his monstrous credulity; so he continued uneasy and disconsolate to the last degree. At last, receiving frequent letters from his masters in which he was required to get bills of exchange for the money, and remit to them, he resolved to leave the place, in order to prevent a discovery, and he embarked on board a little vessel, not for Pisa, as he should have done, but directly for Naples.

There lived there at that time Signor Pietro dello Canigiano, treasurer to the Empress of Constantinople, a very subtle, sensible man, and a great friend to Salabaetto and his masters. To him he made his case known, requesting his assistance in getting himself a livelihood, and declaring that

he would never more return to Florence. Canigiano, who was much concerned for him, replied, "You have done very ill; very ill indeed have you behaved yourself; small is the regard which you have shown to your principals; too much have you expended upon your pleasures. It is done, however, and we must remedy it as well as we can." Then, like a prudent man, he considered what course it was best to take, and acquainted him with it. Salabaetto was pleased with the scheme and resolved to follow it; and having some money of his own, and Canigiano lending him some, he made divers bales of goods well packed together, and procured about twenty casks for oil, which he filled, and returned with them to Palermo, where he entered them as on his own account in the register, with what value he pleased to put upon them; and he laid them up in the warehouse, declaring that they were not to be meddled with till more goods of his should arrive, which he was daily expecting.

The lady hearing of this, and understanding that the goods he had already there were worth two thousand florins, and that what remained to come were rated at three thousand more, began to think that she had as yet got too little from him; therefore she thought of returning the five hundred, to come in for a better part of the five thousand, and accordingly she sent for him. He went with malice in his heart, whilst she, seeming to know nothing of what he had brought, appeared wonderfully pleased at seeing him, and said, "Now, were you really vexed because I failed to give you your money at your time?" He smiled, and replied, "In truth, madam, I was a little uneasy, since I would pluck my very heart out if I thought it would please you; but you shall see how much I was offended. Such is my regard for you, that I have sold the greatest part of my estate, and have brought as much merchandise as is worth two thousand florins, and I expect from the Levant what will amount to three thousand more; resolving to have a warehouse, and to abide here, for the sake of being near you, as I think nobody can be happier in his love than I am in yours."

"Now trust me, Salabaetto," said the lady, "whatever redounds to your benefit is extremely pleasing to me, as I hold you dearer than my own life; and I am glad you are returned with an intention of staying, because I hope to have a great deal of your company; but it is fit that I excuse myself to you, for that sometimes you came to see me, and were not admitted, and at other times not so cheerfully received

as before; and besides this, for my not paying you the money according to promise. Now you must know that I was then in very great trouble, and upon such occasions, be one's love what it may, one cannot look so pleasantly as at another time; I must tell you likewise that it is a very difficult thing for a lady to raise a thousand florins, people impose upon us in such a manner, without ever minding what they promise; so that we are forced to disappoint others. Hence it was, then, and for no other reason, that I did not return you your money; but I had got it ready just as you went away, and would have sent it after you, had I known where to find you; but as I did not, I kept it carefully for you." So sending for a purse, which had the very same florins in it that he had delivered to her, she put it into his hand, saying, "See, and count if there are five hundred." Never was Salabaetto so overjoyed as at that moment; so telling them over, and finding there were just five hundred, he replied, "Madam, I am convinced that what you say is true; but let us talk no more about it, you have done your part, and I assure you, upon that account, as well as the love I have for you, that whatever sum of money you shall want at any time, if it be in my power to supply you, you may command it; as you shall soon see upon trial.

Thus their love being renewed, in word at least, he continued artfully his visits as before; whilst she showed him all the respect and honour that could be, expressing the same fondness as ever. But he, willing to return measure for measure, being invited one night to sup with her, went thither, all sad and melancholy, like a person in despair. When she, kissing and embracing him, would needs know the cause of all that sorrow. He, having suffered her to entreat him for some time, at last said, "I am undone; for the ship which had the goods on board, that I have been expecting, is taken by the corsairs of Monaco, and put up at the ransom of ten thousand florins, one thousand of which falls to my share, and I have not one farthing to pay it with; for the five hundred which you paid me, I sent instantly to Naples, to lay out in cloth to be sent hither; and were I to offer to sell the goods I have here, as it is an unfavourable time, I must do it to a very great loss; and, being a stranger, I have nobody to apply to; so that I know neither what to say nor what to do: and if the money be not sent immediately, the ship will be carried into Monaco, and then they will be past redemption."

She was under great concern at hearing this, reckoning a good part of it as lost to herself; and considering how to prevent the goods being sent to Monaco, at last she said, "Heaven knows how much my love for you makes me grieve for your misfortune. But to what purpose is that? Had I the money, I would instantly give it you; but I have not. Indeed there is a person that lent me five hundred florins the other day, when I was in distress, but he expects an exorbitant interest, viz., no less than thirty in the hundred. If you will have the money of this man, you must give him good security. Now I am ready to pledge my goods here, and pass my word as far as that will go to serve you; but how will you secure the remainder?" Salabaetto knew the reason of her proposing this piece of service, and that she herself was to lend the money; so, being well pleased, he returned her thanks, and said, that, let the interest be what it would, his necessity was such that he must agree to it: then he added, that he would give security upon his goods which he had in the warehouse, and that they should be assigned over in the register to the person who advanced the money, but that he would keep the key, as well for the sake of showing them, if anybody should want to see them, as to prevent their being exchanged or meddled with. The lady replied, "That will do very well, the security is sufficient;" and, at the time appointed, sending for a broker, in whom she put great confidence, she told him what he was to do, and gave him the money, which he carried straightway to Salabaetto, who assigned over his goods to him at the custom-house, and they were entered in his name; thus they parted, giving each other counter-security.

Salabaetto now immediately embarked with the fifteen hundred florins, and went to Pietro dello Canigiano at Naples, whence he remitted to his masters at Florence the entire amount of what he had made of their cloth; and having paid Pietro and every one else what he owed them, they laughed very heartily together at the trick put upon his Sicilian mistress. Thence, resolving to trade no longer, he went to Florence. In the meantime the lady, finding Salabaetto was not at Palermo, began to wonder, and grow half suspicious; and, after waiting two months, and hearing nothing of his return, she made the broker force open the warehouse, when first she tried the casks, which she supposed had been full of oil, and found them full of salt water, with a small quantity of oil at the top, just at the bung-hole. She

then looked into the bales of goods, only two of which had cloth in them, the rest being stuffed with coarse hurds of hemp; and, in short, the whole was not worth two hundred florins. So, finding herself thus imposed upon, she was under great affliction for a long time, with regard to the five hundred florins that she had restored, and much more for the thousand she had lent, often saying, "that whoever had to do with a Tuscan, had need have all their eyes about them." Thus she became a common jest afterwards, having found to her cost that some people have as much cunning as others.

[A story like this may be found in 'Petrus Alphonsus,' and another in the 'Arabian Nights.']

After Dioneo had made an end, Lauretta, knowing that her reign was concluded, and having commended the good advice of Pietro Canigiano, as appeared by its effect, and the sagacity of Salabaetto, no less to be admired, in putting it in execution, took the crown from her own head, and placed it upon Emilia's saying, "Madam, I do not know whether you will make a pleasant queen or not, but a pretty one I am sure you will. See then that your works correspond with your beauty." Emilia, not so much for the honour conferred upon her, as for hearing herself commended on account of that which ladies most of all covet, blushed a little, her face looking like the opening of a rose in the morning. After she had bent her eyes upon the ground, till the redness was something gone off, and had given her orders to the master of the household, concerning what she would have done, she began in this manner: "We often see, ladies, that after oxen have laboured at the yoke all the day, they are then turned loose, and permitted to graze through the forests at their pleasure. It is also certain, that gardens, which have a variety of trees in them, are more delightful than groves where nothing is seen but oaks: for which reasons, considering how many days we have been confined to certain laws, it may be convenient for us all to take a little liberty to refresh, and gain strength against our returning to the yoke. I shall, therefore, give you no particular subject for to-morrow, but leave you all to please yourselves, being of opinion, that a variety of things will be no less entertaining than keeping strictly to one. My successor, if he pleases, may keep to the old laws." She then gave them leave to depart till supper-time. The queen's order was generally approved, and they

went to their different amusements. The ladies made nosegays and chaplets of flowers, and the gentlemen sat down to play, or else to sing; and thus they were employed till supper, when they placed themselves by the fountain-side, and supped very merrily together. Afterwards they began to dance and sing, when the queen, to pursue the method of her predecessors, besides what many of them had voluntarily given, ordered Pamfilo to sing a song, which he did as follows:

SONG.

Such the abundant am'rous joy,
With which my heart elate hath been,
As no restraint, no bounds to know
And flushing in my face is seen!

In vain my feeble song essays
To paint what cannot be exprest;
And which more fully to have known,
Would bring but jealousy at best.

Could I have formed a wish like this,
My utmost hope have reached so far,
To clasp her yielding taper waist,
And press my eager lips to her?

Every one joined in Pamfilo's song; nor were there any among them but made more conjectures than were necessary, to find out what he meant to conceal; and though they imagined different things, yet none of them guessed right. Finally the queen, seeing the song was ended, and that the company were disposed to rest, gave orders for them all to retire to bed.

THE NINTH DAY.

Aurora had now changed the heavens from blue to purple, and the flowers along the meadows began to open to the rising sun, when the queen arose with all her company; and they took a walk together to the grove, not far from the palace, where they saw a variety of creatures, such as deer, goats, etc., so secure from the hunter, by reason of the then raging pestilence, that they stood gazing upon them as if they had been tame. Upon a nearer approach, first to one,

and then to another, as if they meant to play with them, they were greatly delighted to see them run and skip about them. But the sun being now risen a good height it was thought convenient to return. They had all oak garlands on, with their hands full of flowers, or sweet-smelling herbs; so that whoever had seen them must needs have concluded, either that death would not be able to vanquish them, or at least that he would find them no otherwise than merry. In this manner they came, step by step, to the palace, laughing, joking, and singing, all the way, where they found everything in order; and after reposing themselves awhile, they sang half a dozen songs before they would sit down to table. They then washed their hands, and dinner was served up, when being sufficiently regaled, and after indulging in a dance or two, the queen gave leave for such as were disposed to go to rest. At the usual hour they met at the usual place, when the queen, looking to Filomena, desired her to begin for that day; which she did in this manner:

NOVEL I.

Madam Francesca having two lovers, and liking neither of them, rids herself of both, by making one go and lie down in a person's grave, and sending the other to fetch him out.

I AM well pleased, madam, as it is your will, to run the first ring, in this free and open field of story telling, in which your courtesy has placed us; not doubting, if I perform well, but that they who come after will do as well or better. It has often been made appear in our discourses, how great the force of love is; nor do I think the subject would be exhausted, were we to talk of nothing else from year's end to year's end: and because it has led its votaries not only into various dangers of death, but even into the very mansions of the dead, I propose to add a story to what has been already given, wherein, besides the power of love, will be shown the contrivance of a certain lady to rid herself of two lovers, who were neither of them to her liking.

In the city of Pistoia, there was a handsome widow lady, whom two of our townsmen, who were banished thither, were desperately in love with, and used their utmost endeavours to gain her affection. The one was named Rinuccio Palermino, and the other Alessandro Chiarmontesi, and neither was aware of the other's attachment to the widow. Now

this lady, who was called Francesca de' Lazari, having been often solicited by them, had listened too inconsiderately to their importunities; and being afterwards desirous to get rid of them both, without being able to do it, it came into her head at last to ask a piece of service of them, which, though possible to be done, she supposed neither would undertake, and that, from their not complying, she might have a just pretence for turning them adrift. The thing was this: the very day that she first thought of it, a man was buried at Pistoia, who, though of a good family, was reputed to have been one of the vilest wretches that ever was born; moreover, he was so deformed, that they who did not know him, would have been frightened at the first sight of him. This circumstance, she thought, fell in very aptly with her design; and therefore she said to her maid:

"Thou knowest what plague and trouble I have had with these two Florentines: now I have no mind to have either the one or the other. In order, then, to shake them off, I intend to make a trial of them in a certain affair which I am confident they will refuse to do, and thou shalt hear what it is. Last night, thou knowest, was interred in the churchyard belonging to the lesser friars, Scannadio (for so was the man called whom we have been speaking of), who, even when alive, was frightful to most people. Go then privately to Allessandro, and say that thy mistress orders thee to acquaint him, that the time is now come when he may be secure of her love in the following manner:—One of her relations, for a reason which he will know hereafter, is to bring that man's corpse to her house, which she is much averse to; therefore she begs it as a favour of him, that he would go about the beginning of the night into the grave, and put the man's shroud on, waiting there till the person comes to take him away, which he is to suffer him to do without speaking a word, and let him carry him to her house, where she will be ready to receive him, and the rest he may leave to her. If he agrees to it, it is well; but if he refuses, charge him at his peril not to come any more in her sight, or trouble her with his messages. After this, thou must go to Rinuccio, and tell him, that thy mistress is ready to gratify him, upon condition that he will do her one piece of service, which is to fetch Scannadio out of his grave about midnight, and bring him to her house, the meaning of which he will see at that time; and if he should refuse, that he offer to come no more near her." The maid obeyed, and going to both, delivered her

messages. They replied, that they would not only get into a grave, but even into hell, if it was her desire. She accordingly reported their answers to the lady, who was waiting to see if they would be such fools as to comply.

At night, therefore, Alessandro stripped to his waistcoat and went to supply Scannadio's place in the vault, when he was seized with a sudden terror by the way, and began to say to himself, "What a fool am I! Whither am I going? How do I know but this is a trap laid by some of her relations, who have made a discovery of my love, to murder me in the vault? The deed may be effected, and nobody know anything of the matter. Or how can I be assured but it is a stratagem of some rival whom she may love better than me? But suppose again, on the other hand, that none of these things are intended, and that her relations carry me to her house, I must conclude that they cannot want Scannadio's body either to keep themselves, or to present to her, but rather that they mean to mangle it, he having deserved such treatment from them. She also enjoins me not to speak a word, whatever shall be done to me. But suppose they pluck out my eyes, or lop off my hands, how can I bear that? And should I cry out, and they know me, they might then use me ill; or, otherwise, they may not leave me with the lady, and so she may pretend that I have disobeyed her orders, and my labour will be all lost." Full of these reflections he was on the point of returning home, till his love spurred him on with more prevailing arguments to the contrary, and hurried him along to the vault, which he opened; and having entered, he stripped the dead body, and put on the shroud. Then, having closed the grave again, he laid himself down in Scannadio's place, when calling to mind the man's character, and the reports which he had heard of his ransacking people's graves, and committing all kinds of villany, he was so terrified that his hair stood on end, and he was expecting every moment that the man should rise up, and strangle him there. Yet still his love got the better of his fear, and he lay as if he was dead, waiting for the event.

As soon as it was midnight, Rinuccio went out also to obey his mistress's commands; and as he passed along, he began to think of many things which might happen to him; particularly his being arrested by the officers of the Signoria with Scannadio's body on his back, and burnt for sacrilege, or else his falling under the resentment of the man's rela-

tions, if they should chance to know it; with more such apprehensions, enough to have deterred him from the enterprise. But again he said to himself, "What, and shall I say no to the first request of the lady I have loved, and do still love so much; especially as it is to gain her favour? Undoubtedly, were I sure to die in the attempt I would fulfil my promise." Full of that resolution, he went to the grave, and opened it. Alessandro, though he was very much frightened, lay still nevertheless; whilst Rinuccio, thinking that it was Scannadio's body, took him by the feet, drew him out, and hoisting him upon his shoulders, went on towards Francesca's house. But carrying him along without any great care, he would frequently hit him a great thump against the wall, first on one side, and then on the other: the night also was so dark, that he scarcely knew where he went; and being now got to her door, and she sitting with her maid at the window, expecting their coming and prepared to send them about their business, it happened that the officers were waiting there, to take a certain outlaw, when, hearing the noise of Rinuccio's steps, they uncovered a lantern, to see who it was, levelled their halberds, and cried out, "Who is there?" Rinuccio, upon this, without any great deliberation, threw his burden down, and ran away as fast as his legs would carry him. Alessandro, too, got up as speedily as he could, though the dead man's clothes were a good deal too long for him, and made off as well as the other.

Now the lady saw plainly, by the officers' light, how Rinuccio had the other upon his back, with the dead man's shroud on, and was astonished at the resolution of both, laughing heartily, however, as soon as she saw Alessandro thrown down, and that each of them took to his heels. Highly amused by the adventure, and thankful for her deliverance, she returned into her chamber, declaring to her maid, that surely their love must be very great to fulfil such conditions. Rinuccio stayed at a distance, cursing his hard fortune, till the officers were gone, when he came groping about to find where he had thrown Alessandro down, desiring to complete his commission; but not meeting with him, and supposing that the officers had taken him away, he went home, vexed at his disappointment. Alessandro, also, not knowing what to do, and being ignorant who the person was that had carried him thither, went home with the like dissatisfaction. In the morning, Scannadio's vault being found open, and the body not to be seen, because

Alessandro had rolled it to the bottom, the town was all in an uproar about it, many people believing that the devil had certainly carried him off. Nevertheless, both the lovers signified to the lady what they had done, and how they had been disappointed, excusing themselves thereby, for not having fully executed her commands, and still entreating her favour and love: whilst she, seeming to credit neither, cut them both short with an absolute denial, inasmuch as both had failed in the performance of the conditions required.

[In an old English ballad a similar expedient is devised by a prioress, to get rid of her three lovers, a knight, a prelate, and a burgher. She promises her affections to the first, if he will lie all night in a chapel as a dead body, and wrapped in a winding-sheet. Next she requires the priest to say masses over the corpse, which she pretends is that of a cousin who had not been properly interred. She then tells the burgher to bring the body to her house, as the deceased owed her money, and must not be buried till his friends discharged the debt; and in order to terrify the priest, she desires that he should equip himself in disguise of the devil. The lovers all meet in the chapel, where both the knight and priest run off, so that the merchant has no corpse to bring home to his mistress. Hence the allotted service being accomplished by none of them, the lady refuses her love to all three. This tale is entitled the 'Pryorys and her Three Wooyrs,' and has been published in Jamieson's 'Popular Ballads,' from a MS. in the British Museum, attributed to Lydgate.]

NOVEL II.

An abbess going in haste, and in the dark, to surprise one of her nuns, instead of her veil puts on the priest's breeches. The lady accused makes a just remark upon this, and so escapes.

Filomena was now silent, and the lady's contrivance to free herself from two such troublesome people, whom she could not love, was generally approved; their daring presumption being judged the effect not of love, but of folly. The queen called on Eliza to follow; and she immediately began:—The lady you have just mentioned saved herself very dexterously from trouble; but a certain nun escaped the most imminent danger, by a word or two aptly spoken, with good luck to aid. There are many foolish people, who take upon them to be rigid censors and correctors of others, and whom fortune takes occasion sometimes very justly to

expose and humble, as was the case of the abbess, under whose government the nun was, of whom I am going to speak.

In Lombardy was a convent, famous for its sanctity, and amongst the other nuns belonging to it, was a lady named Isabella, of exquisite beauty, as well as of noble family, who had fallen in love with a young gentleman, that came with a relation of hers to see her at the grate. He also had conceived the same affection for her, and this love continued some time without effect, to the great concern of both. At last he thought of a way to get to her, and continued visiting her in that manner, till he was discovered by one of the ladies. She communicated the affair to some others; and first they were resolved to accuse her to the abbess, a worthy good lady, in the opinion of the nuns and other people that knew her; but afterwards, for fear Isabella should deny it, it was agreed that the abbess should surprise them together; and so they kept watch by turns, in order to find them out. One night, therefore, Isabella having her lover in her chamber, without the least suspicion of their designs, the scouts immediately perceived it, and dividing themselves into parties, one guarded the entrance into her room, whilst the others ran to the lady abbess's chamber, where, knocking at the door, they cried, "Pray, madam, get up as quick as you can, for our sister Isabella has a man in her cell." Now that night it happened, that the abbess had a priest with her, who had been frequently brought to her in a chest; and fearing lest, out of their great hurry and eagerness, they might force open the door, she immediately rose, and dressed herself as well as she could in the dark; and thinking that she had taken a certain plaited veil, which she usually wore, she chanced to lay hold of the priest's breeches, and threw them over her head in its stead. She now went forth, and locking the door after her, said, "Where is this wicked woman?"

Away then she posted along with the nuns, who were so zealous and intent upon finding out poor Isabella, that they never took notice of what she had upon her head: and coming to her chamber, they found her and her lover together, who were so confounded that they could not speak a word. Isabella was forthwith seized, and carried to the chapter-house, the young gentleman being left in the cell, waiting to see what the end would be, and resolving to have revenge, if any harm was offered to his mistress, and afterwards to take her away. The abbess having taken her place in the chap-

ter, with her nuns about her, who had all their eyes only on the culprit, she began to give her a most severe reprimand, for having defiled, as she told her, by her most disorderly and very wicked actions, the sanctity, honesty, and good name of the convent, adding thereto many most bitter threats. The lady, quite confounded between fear and shame, was unable to make any defence, but her very silence moved many of the sisterhood to compassion. The abbess still continuing her invectives, the poor nun happened to raise up her head, when she saw the breeches hanging on each side of the abbess's neck, and being a little comforted with that, as she conjectured the fact, she said, "Please, madam, to button your coif, and then tell me what you would have."—"My coif?" cried the abbess, "you wicked woman! Have you the assurance to laugh at me? Do you think what you have done is any laughing matter?" The lady said once more, "I beg, madam, that you will first button your coif, and then speak." The nuns now looked at their abbess, the abbess put her hands up to her head, and all of them perceived Isabella's meaning. The abbess, finding that she was clearly detected in the very same crime, soon changed her note, and began to excuse and palliate the matter. So she returned to her priest, and Isabella to her lover. And they continued their interviews together, in spite of all such as envied their happiness; whilst the rest procured themselves lovers as soon as they could.

[This is the 'Pseautier' of La Fontaine.]

NOVEL III.

Master Simon, the doctor, with Bruno, and the rest, make Calandrino believe that he is with child. The patient gives them fowls and money, to compound a medicine for him, and he recovers without being delivered.

After Eliza had concluded her novel, and the company had all expressed their joy for the lady's happy escape from the invidious censures of her sister-nuns, the queen ordered Filostrato to proceed, which he immediately did in this manner:—The odd figure of a judge, that was spoken of yesterday, prevented my giving you a story of Calandrino, which I had ready to tell you. Therefore, as whatever is related of him must be entertaining, though we have had a great

deal already about him and his companions, I shall now say what I had then in my mind.

You have heard who Calandrino was, as well as the rest of the people concerned in this novel; so I shall tell you, without farther preface, that he had an aunt who died and left him about twenty pounds, on which he began to talk of purchasing an estate, and was running to treat with every broker in Florence, as if he had been worth the Indies; but the negotiation always broke down when they come to talk of a price. Now Bruno and Buffalmacco, who knew all this, had often told him that he had better spend the money with them, than lay it out on a little paltry land; but in vain; he would never part with a farthing. One day, the two wags being in company with another painter, whose name was Nello, they all agreed to feast themselves well at Calandrino's expense, and settled how it was to be done. The next morning, as Calandrino was going out of his house, Nello met, and said, "Good morning to you, friend."—"The same to you," Calandrino replied, "and a good year also." Nello now stopped, and began to look wistfully in his face. "What are you looking at?" said Calandrino. "Has anything been the matter with you in the night?" quoth Nello. "You are quite a different person." Calandrino grew very thoughtful at this, and said, "Oh, dear me! do you think I am ill?"—"Oh! I do not say that," replied Nello, "though I never saw a man so altered, but it may be something else;" and away he went. Calandrino went on, a little diffident, though feeling nothing all the time, when Buffalmacco came up to him, seeing him part from Nello, and asked him whether he was well. Calandrino replied, "Indeed I do not know; is it possible to be otherwise, and I not perceive it?"—"It may be so, or it may not," said Buffalmacco, "but I assure you, you look as though you were half dead." He now thought himself in a high fever, when Bruno came up, and the first word he said was, "Why, Calandrino, how you look! you are like a ghost. What is the matter with you?" He now concluded it was really so, and asked, in a great fright, what he had best do. "I advise," quoth Bruno, "that you go home and get to bed, cover yourself up close, and send your water to Master Simon, the doctor: he is our friend, you know, and will tell you at once what to do; in the mean time we will go with you, and do what we can for you." So they took him to his own house, and he went up stairs ready to die away every moment, saying to his wife, "Come and cover

me up well in bed, for I find myself extremely ill." Having laid down, he sent his water by a little girl to the doctor, whose shop was then in the old market, at the sign of the Melon. Bruno now said to his friends, "Do you stay here, and I will go and hear what the doctor says, and bring him with me if there be occasion." "Pray do, my good friend," said Calandrino, "and let me know how it stands with me, for I feel very strangely in my inside."

Bruno getting to the doctor's before the girl, let him into the secret. When she came there, and he had examined the water, he said to her, "Go, and bid him keep warm, and I will come instantly, and give directions what to do." She returned, and told Calandrino, and in a little time the doctor and Bruno came together, when the doctor sat down by him, and began to feel his pulse: at last he said, the wife being present, "I must tell you, as a friend, that your illness is nothing else but your being with child." As soon as Calandrino heard this, he began to roar out and say to his wife, "O, Tessa, this is all your doing, che non vuogali altro che di sopra. I told you how it would be." Poor Tessa, who was a very modest woman, was so overcome with shame at hearing her husband talk thus, that she left the room, without saying a word. Calandrino continued his lamentations, crying, "O Lord! what shall I do? How shall I be delivered? Which way is the child to come into the world? It's a clear case, I am a dead man, for which I may thank my wife—curse her! O that I were well! I would not leave a whole bone in her skin. If I have only the luck to get over it this time, I'll take care she does not get the upperhand of me again, let her beg as hard as she will." His companions had much ado to keep from laughing, seeing him in all this fright; and as for the doctor, he shewed all his teeth in such a manner, that you might have drawn every one of them. At length, Calandrino beseeching the physician's best advice and assistance, doctor Simon replied, "Calandrino, I would not have you make yourself too uneasy; for since I know your ailment, I doubt not but I shall soon give you relief, and with a very little trouble; but it will be with some expense."—"O doctor," quoth the patient, "I have twenty pounds, which should have bought me an estate: take it all, rather than let it come to a labour; for I hear the women make such a noise at those times, though they have so much room, that I shall never get through it alive."—"Never fear," said the doctor, "I shall prepare you a distilled liquor, very

pleasant to the taste, which will dissolve and bring it away in three days, and leave you as sound as a trout. Now I must have six fat fowls, and for the other things, which will cost about ten shillings, you must give one of your friends here the money to buy, and bring them to my shop; and to-morrow morning I will send you the distilled water, which you must drink by a large glassful at a time." He replied, "Doctor, I rely upon you." So he gave Bruno ten shillings, and money also for the fowls, and desired he would take that trouble upon him.

The doctor made a little hippocrass, and sent it to him; whilst Bruno, with his companions and the doctor, were very merry over the fowls, and other good cheer purchased with the rest of the money. After Calandrino had drunk the hippocrass for the three mornings, the doctor came with his companions to see him, and said, after feeling his pulse, "You are now quite well, and need confine yourself within doors no longer." He was overjoyed at this, and gave the doctor great thanks, telling everybody he met what a cure Doctor Simon had wrought on him in three days' time, and without the least pain. Nor were his friends less pleased in overreaching his extreme avarice; but as to his wife, she saw into the trick, and made a great clamour about it.

NOVEL IV.

Fortarrigo played away all that he had at Buonconvento, as also the money of Angiolieri, who was his master; then running away in his shirt, and pretending that the other had robbed him, he caused him to be seized by the country people, when he put on his clothes, and rode away upon his horse, leaving him there in his shirt.

CALANDRINO'S simplicity had occasioned a good deal of diversion; when Neifile, as it was the queen's pleasure, began in this manner:—If it were not more difficult for people to show their worth and good sense, than their bad dispositions and folly, they would not need to lay their tongues under such severe restraint, as many are forced to do. Now I mean to tell a story quite contrary to the last; namely, how the knavery of one man overreached the understanding of another, to the great detriment and derision of the person so outwitted.

There dwelt, not long since, at Siena, two young men of equal years, named Angiolieri and Fortarrigo, who, though

they differed much in other respects, resembled each other in their disobedience to their fathers, by which means they became inseparable friends. Angiolieri, who was an accomplished gentleman, found that he could not subsist very well in Siena upon his father's allowance, and hearing that a certain cardinal was come to Ancona, as the pope's legate, who had showed a particular regard for him, he resolved to go thither, in hopes of bettering his condition. So making his mind known to his father, he got half a year's stipend beforehand, in order to furnish himself with clothes and horses for his more creditable appearance. As he was in want of a servant, Fortarrigo, who had notice of it, came and requested the favour that he would take him along with him in that capacity, offering to be his valet, footman, and everything else, without a farthing of wages more than his expenses. This the other refused, not that he thought him unfit for his service, but because he knew him to be a gamester, and one that would frequently get drunk. Fortarrigo assured him he would be constantly on his guard with respect to both, confirming it with many oaths, and begging so hard besides, that at last his request was granted.

Accordingly they set out upon their journey, and rode as far as Buonconvento, where they stopped to dine; and after dinner, as it was very hot weather, Angiolieri ordered a bed to be prepared, when he made his man undress him, and went to sleep, ordering him to call him up exactly as the clock struck nine. Whilst he was asleep, then, Fortarrigo went to the tavern, and, after drinking pretty heartily, began to play with some people there, who soon won what little money he had, and also the clothes off his back. Being very desirous of retrieving what he had lost, he went, stripped as he was, to Angiolieri's bed-side, and finding him fast asleep, took all the money out of his pocket, and, returning to play, lost it, as he had done the rest. As soon as Angiolieri awoke, he rose and dressed himself, inquiring for Fortarrigo, who, not being to be found, he supposed he was gone somewhere or other to sleep, as he was used to do; therefore he determined to leave him there, ordering the saddle and portmanteau to be put upon his own horse, intending to provide himself with another servant at Corsignano. Then putting his hand into his pocket, to pay his landlord, he found he had no money, upon which he made a great uproar, declaring that he had been robbed, and threatening to have them all sent prisoners to Siena; when, behold, Fortarrigo came running up in his

shirt, with a design of stealing his master's clothes, as well as his money, and seeing him about to ride away, he said, "What is the meaning of this, sir? Why should we go so soon? Do stay a little. A man has got my coat in pawn for eight and thirty shillings, and I dare say he will let us have it for five and thirty to be paid down." But as he was saying this, a person came and told Angiolieri, that Fortarrigo was a thief, as appeared from the quantity of money he had lost; upon which Angiolieri was in a most violent passion, threatening to have him hanged up and gibbeted; saying this, he mounted his horse. "But," said Fortarrigo, as if he had been no way concerned, "pray, sir, leave off this idle talk, and let us have regard to the main point; we may have this coat now for five and thirty shillings, but if we stay till to-morrow, the person who lent me the money may expect eight and thirty for it. Why then should we lose these three shillings?" Angiolieri was out of all patience, hearing this from him; and seeing the surprise of the people all round him, who manifestly believed, not that Fortarrigo had gamed away his money, but rather that he had some of Fortarrigo's money in keeping, he said, "Plague take thee and thy coat! Is it not enough to have robbed me, but thou must insult me into the bargain, and stop my going away?" Still Fortarrigo continued, as if he had not been the person spoken to, "Consider these three shillings. Do you think I shall never pay you again? If you have any regard for me, pray do. Why need you be in such a hurry? We shall be in time enough at Torrenieri. Then open your purse. I may go to every shop in Siena, and not get such another coat. And to tell me that I must leave it for eight and thirty shillings, when it is worth more than forty, is doing me a double injury."

Angiolieri, vexed to the last degree at seeing himself robbed, and then kept in talk in that manner, turned his horse, and rode towards Torrenieri. Fortarrigo, who had still a more knavish design, ran after him for two miles together, begging for his coat; and as the other was going to push on, in order to get rid of his noise, Fortarrigo happened to see some labourers by the road where Angiolieri was to pass, and called out to them, "Stop thief;" so they took their forks and spades, and seized Angiolieri, imagining that he had robbed the other, who was pursuing him in that manner. It was in vain that Angiolieri offered to tell them how the case really was; for in the mean time, Fortarrigo come

up, and said, with an angry countenance, "I have a good mind to knock your brains out, you rascal! to ride away with what belongs to me;" and turning to the people, he added, "You see, gentlemen, in what a plight he left me yonder at the inn, having first gamed away all that he had of his own. I may well say that it is you I am obliged to for getting back my horse and my clothes, and I shall always acknowledge it." Angiolieri then told them a very different story, but they had no regard to what he said. So Fortarrigo dismounted him, with their assistance, stripped him of his clothes, which he put on himself, and got upon his horse, leaving him there in his shirt, and barefoot. Then he returned to Siena, giving it out everywhere that he had won Angiolieri's horse and clothes at play; whilst Angiolieri thinking to have visited the cardinal in a sumptuous manner, returned poor and naked to Buonconvento, and was so ashamed of himself, that he would not go back to Siena, but procuring some money upon the horse that Fortarrigo had ridden on, he clothed himself and went to his relations at Corsignano, where he stayed till he received a supply from his father. Thus Angiolieri's good design was entirely frustrated by the other's subtle villany, which yet in due time and place met with its deserved punishment.

NOVEL V.

Calandrino is in love with a certain damsel; Bruno prepares a charm for her, by virtue of which she follows him, and they are found together by his wife.

NEIFILE's short novel being concluded, without either too much talk or laughter, the queen ordered Fiammetta to follow, which she did cheerfully in this manner:—There is nothing, be it ever so often repeated, but will please always if mentioned in due time and place. When I consider, therefore, the intent of our meeting, which is only to amuse and divert ourselves whilst we are here, I judge nothing either ill-timed or ill-placed which serves that purpose. So, though we have had much about Calandrino already, yet I will venture to give you another story concerning him; in relating which, were I disposed to vary from the truth, I should carefully have disguised it under very different names; but, as romancing upon these occasions greatly

lessens the pleasure of the hearer, I shall report it in its true shape, relying on the reason before assigned.

Niccolo Cornacchini, a fellow citizen of ours, was a very rich man. Amongst his other estates he had one at Camerata, where he built a mansion, and agreed with Bruno and Buffalmacco to paint it; but there being a great deal of work, they took Nello and Calandrino to assist them. As some of the chambers were furnished, and there was an old woman to look after the house, a son of this Niccolo's named Filippo, a gay young gentleman, would frequently bring a mistress thither for a day or two, and then send her away. Amongst the rest that used to come with him, was one Niccolosa, an agreeable and facetious woman enough, who going from her chamber one morning, in a loose, white bedgown, to wash her hands and face at a fountain in the court, it happened that Calandrino was there at the same time, when he made his compliments to her, which she returned with a kind of smile at the oddity of the man. Upon this he began to look wistfully at her, and seeing she was very handsome, he found pretences for staying, yet durst not speak a word. Still her looks seemed to give him encouragement, and the poor fellow became so enamoured, that he had no power to leave the place, till Filippo chanced to call her into the house. Calandrino then returned to his friends in a most piteous taking, which Bruno perceiving, said, "What the devil is the matter with you, that you seem to be in all this trouble?" He replied, "Ah! my friend, if I had any one to assist me, I should do well enough."—"As how?"—"I will tell you," he replied. "The most beautiful woman you ever saw, exceeding even the fairy queen herself, fell in love with me just now as I went to the well."—"Wheugh!" said Bruno, "you must take care it be not Filippo's mistress."—"I believe it is the same," he replied; "for she went away the moment he called her: but why should I mind that? Was she a king's, I would lie with her, if I could."—"Well," quoth Bruno, "I will find out who she is, and if she proves the same, I can tell you in two words what you have to do; for we are well acquainted together: but how shall we manage, that Buffalmacco may know nothing of the matter? I can never speak to her but he will be present."—"As to Buffalmacco," said he, "I am in no fear about him; but we must take care of Nello; he is my wife's relation, and would spoil our whole scheme."

Now Bruno knew Niccolosa, very well, and when Calan-

drino was gone out one day, to get a sight of her, he acquainted Buffalmacco and Nello with the affair, and they agreed together what was to be done. Upon Calandrino's return, therefore, Bruno whispered him, and said, "Have you seen her?"—"Alas! I have, and she has slain me outright."—"I will go and see," said Bruno, "whether she be the person I mean; if she be, you may leave the whole to me." So he went and told Filippo and Niccolosa what had passed, and laid a plot with them for making sport of the enamoured Calandrino. He then came back, and said, "It is the same, therefore we must be very cautious; for if Filippo should chance to find it out, all the water in the river would never wash off the guilt in his sight. But what shall I say to her on your part?"—"First, you must let her know," said Calandrino, "that she shall have much joy, and pleasure without end, and afterwards that I am her most obedient servant, and so forth. Do you understand?"—"Yes," quoth Bruno, "I do, and you may now trust me to manage for you."

When supper-time arrived, they left their work, and went down into the court, where they found Filippo and his mistress waiting to make themselves merry with the poor man. Calandrino began at once to ogle her in such a manner that a blind man almost must have perceived it; and she encouraged him with all her heart, thinking it capital fun, whilst Filippo pretended to be talking to Buffalmacco and the others, as if he saw nothing of the matter. After some time the painters left the place, to Calandrino's great vexation, and as they were returning to Florence, said Bruno to Calandrino, "I tell you now, that you have made her melt like ice before the sun; do but bring your guitar, and play her a tune, and she will throw herself out of the window to you."—"Do you think so?"—"Most certainly," replied the other.—"Well," quoth Calandrino, "who but myself could have made such a conquest in so short a time? I am not like your young fellows that whine for years together to no manner of purpose. Oh! you would be vastly pleased to hear me play and sing: besides, I am not old, as you suppose. She saw this at once; but I will convince her still better of it if once I get her unto my clutches. By the Lord I'll please her so that she will run after me as a mother does after her child."—"Oh, you'll touzle her no doubt," said Bruno; "I fancy I see you with those teeth of yours like lutepegs, biting her little vermilion lips, and her cheeks that looks like two roses, and then munching her all

over." Calandrino taking all this in earnest, fancied himself at the sport already, and began to sing and dance about as if he would jump out of his skin. The next morning he carried his instrument with him, and diverted them all very much with his minstrelsy; and not a bit could he work, for he was every moment running to the window, and to the door, in hopes to see his charmer. Bruno carried all his messages, and answered them too as from her; and when she was not there, he would bring letters, purposing to give her admirer hopes that she would soon gratify his desires, but that then she was with her relations, and could not see him.

Thus Bruno and Buffalmacco diverted themselves at Calandrino's expense for some time, often getting from him presents to give the lady, such as a comb, a purse, a knife, or such nicknacks, for which Bruno brought him in return counterfeit rings of no value, with which he was vastly delighted. Besides all these things they got many a good treat and presents out of him, that they might be sedulous in attending to his business. The affair had gone on in this manner for two months, when seeing that the work was nearly finished, and imagining that unless he brought his love to a conclusion before that time, he should have no opportunity of doing it afterwards, he began to be very urgent with Bruno about it. When Niccolosa next came there, Bruno had a talk with her and Filippo. Then he went to Calandrino, and said to him, "Look you, comrade, this lady has made us a thousand promises to no purpose, so that it appears to me as if she only did it to lead us by the nose: my advice, therefore, is, that we make her comply, whether she will or not."—"Odds life! let us do it out of hand," cried Calandrino.—"But," says Bruno, "will your heart serve you to touch her with a certain charm that I shall give you?"—"You need not doubt that." "Then, you must procure me a little virgin-parchment, a living bat, three grains of incense, and a consecrated candle." All that night was Calandrino employed in catching a bat, which at length he brought with the other things to Bruno, who went into a room by himself, scribbled some odd characters upon the parchment, and gave it him, saying, "All you have to do is to touch her with this, and she will do that moment what you would have her. Therefore, if Filippo should go from home, take an opportunity to steal up to her, and having touched her, then go into the barn, which is a most convenient place for your purpose, whither she will follow you, and then you know that you

have to do." Calandrino received the charm with great joy, saying, "Let me alone for that."

Meanwhile Nello, whom he was most afraid of, and who was as deep as any in the plot, went, by Bruno's direction, to Calandrino's wife, at Florence, and said to her, "Cousin, you have now a fair opportunity to be revenged on your husband, for his beating you the other day without cause: if you let it slip, I will never look upon you more, either as a relation or a friend. He has a mistress, whom he is frequently with, and at this very time they have made an appointment to meet; then pray be a witness to it, and correct him as he deserves." This seemed to her beyond a jest. "Oh, the villain!" she said. "But I will pay him off all old scores." Accordingly, taking her hood, and a woman to bear her company, she went along with him; and when Bruno saw them at a distance, he said to Filippo, "See, our friends are coming; you know what you have to do." On this, Filippo went where Calandrino and the people were at work, and said, "Masters, I must go to Florence; you will take care not to be idle when I am away." He then went and hid himself in a place where he might see what passed.

As soon as Calandrino thought he was far enough off, he went into the court, where he found the lady all alone. She, well knowing what he meant to do, approached him, looking more than usually gracious. Calandrino touched her with the writing, and immediately moved off, without saying a word, towards the barn. Niccolosa followed him in, and shut the door; then flinging her arms round him, she threw him flat on the straw, fell over him with her hands upon his shoulders, holding him down so fast that he could not kiss her, whilst she made believe to be feasting her eyes with the sight of him. At length she cried out, "O my dear Calandrino! my life! my soul! my only comfort! how long have I desired to have thee in this manner?" He, unable to move, said, "My dearest joy! do let me have one kiss."—"My jewel," replied she, "thou art in too much haste; let me satisfy myself first with gazing upon thee." Bruno, Buffalmacco, and Filippo, heard and saw all this; and just as he was striving to get a kiss from her, up comes Nello along with the wife, and cries, "I vow to God they are together." Monna Tessa, in her rage, burst open the door, and beheld Niccolosa astride of Calandrino, until on the entrance of intruders she left her spark, and went to Filippo; whilst the wife ran and scratched Calandrino's face all over, and tore

out his hair, screaming at him, "You poor pitiful rascal, to dare to serve me in this manner! You old villain! What! have you not enough to do at home? A fine fellow, truly, to pretend to a mistress, with this old worn-out carcase! and she as fine a lady, to take up with such a precious thing as you are!" Calandrino was confounded to that degree, that he made no defence; so she beat him as she pleased, till at length he humbly begged her not to make that clamour, unless she had a mind to have him murdered, for that the lady was no less a person than the wife of the master of the house.

"A plague confound her," she said, "be she who she will." Bruno and Buffalmacco, who, with Filippo and Niccolosa, had been laughing heartily at what passed, came in upon them now, as though they had been drawn thither by the noise. When, with much ado, they had pacified Monna Tessa, they persuaded Calandrino to go home, and come back no more, for fear Filippo should do him a mischief. So he went to Florence, miserably scratched and beaten, without having the heart ever to return; but plagued with the perpetual reproaches of his wife, he let his hot love grow cold, after having afforded great matter for diversion to his friends, to Niccolosa, and to Filippo.

NOVEL VI.

Two young gentlemen lie at an inn, one of whom goes to bed to the landlord's daughter; whilst the wife, by mistake, lies with the other. Afterwards, he that had lain with the daughter, gets to bed to the father, and tells him all that had passed, thinking it had been his friend: a great uproar is made about it; upon which the wife goes to bed to the daughter, and very cunningly sets all to rights again.

Calandrino, who had so frequently diverted the company, made them laugh once more: when the queen laid her next commands upon Pamfilo, who therefore said:—Ladies, the name of Niccolosa, mentioned in the last novel, puts me in mind of one concerning another of the same name; in which will be shown, how the subtle contrivance of a certain good woman was the means of preventing a great deal of scandal.

On the plains of Mugnone lived, not long ago, an honest man, who kept a small house for the entertainment of travellers, serving them with meat and drink for their money, but seldom lodging any, unless they were his particular acquaint-

ances. He had a wife, a very comely woman, by whom he had two children, the one an infant, the other a fine handsome girl of about fifteen or sixteen years of age, not yet married. She had taken the fancy of a young gentleman of our city, who used to travel much that way, and being proud of such a conquest, she strove to preserve his good opinion, so that their mutual inclinations would several times have been gratified, had not Pinuccio, for that was the young gentleman's name, carefully avoided it, for her credit as well as his own. At last, his love growing every day more fervent, he resolved, in order to gain his point, to lie all night at her father's house; supposing, as he was acquainted with the state of the house, that it might then be effected without any one's privity. He communicated his design to a confidential friend of his, named Adriano; so they hired a couple of horses one evening, and having their portmanteaus behind them, filled perhaps with straw, they set out from Florence; and, after taking a circuit, came, as it grew late, to the plains of Mugnone. There, turning their horses' heads, as if they had come from Romagna, they rode on to this cottage, and knocked at the door, which was immediately opened by the attentive landlord. "Honest landlord," said Pinuccio, "we must beg the favour of a night's lodging, for we designed to have reached Florence, but have so managed that it is now much too late, as you see."—"Sir," replied the host, "you know very well how ill I can accommodate such gentlemen as yourselves; but, as you are come at such an hour, and there is no time for your travelling any farther, I will entertain you as well as I can." So they dismounted, and went into the house, having first taken care of their horses; and as they had provision along with them, they sat down and supped with their host.

Now there was only one little chamber in the house, which had three beds in it; namely, two at one end, and the third at the other, opposite to them, with just room to go between, and no more. The least incommodious of these, the landlord ordered to be sheeted for these two gentlemen, and put them to bed. A little time afterwards, neither of them being asleep, though they pretended to be so, he made his daughter lie in one of the beds that remained; he and his wife went into the other, and she set the cradle with the child by her bed-side. Things being so disposed, and Pinuccio having made an exact observation of every particular, as soon as he thought it a proper time, and that every one

was asleep, he rose, and went softly to bed to the daughter, where he remained to his great satisfaction. In the mean time, a cat happened to throw something down in the house, which awakened the good woman, who, fearing it was something else, got up in the dark, and went where she had heard the noise. Just then it chanced that Adriano rose, upon a particular occasion, and finding the cradle in his way, he moved it nearer to his own bed; and having done what he rose for, went to bed again, without troubling himself to put the cradle back in its place. The good woman, finding what was thrown down to be of no moment, never troubled herself to strike a light, to see farther about it, but returned to the bed where her husband lay; and not finding the cradle, "Bless me," she said to herself, "I had like to have made a strange mistake, and gone to bed to my guests!" Going farther then, and finding the cradle which stood by Adriano, she stepped into bed to him, thinking it had been her husband. He was awake, and treated her very kindly, without saying a word all the time to undeceive her.

At length Pinuccio, fearing lest he should fall asleep, and so be surprised with his mistress, after having made the best use of his time, left her to return to his own bed; when meeting with the cradle, and supposing that was the host's bed, he went farther, and stepped into the host's bed indeed, who immediately awoke. Pinuccio, thinking it was his friend, said to him, "Surely, nothing was ever so sweet as Niccolosa; never man was so blessed as I have been with her all night long." The host, who anything but pleased with this news, said first to himself, "What the devil is the man doing here?" Afterwards, being more passionate than wise, he cried out, "Thou art the greatest of villains to use one in that manner: but I vow to God I will pay thee for it." Pinuccio, who was none of the sharpest men in the world, seeing his mistake, without ever thinking to amend it, as he might have done, replied, "You pay me! what can you do?" The hostess, imagining that she had been with her husband, said to Adriano, "Hark to our guests! what is the matter with them?" He replied, with a laugh, "Let them be hanged, if they will; they got drunk, I suppose, last night." The woman now distinguished her husband's voice, and hearing Adriano, soon knew where she was, and with whom. Therefore she very discreetly got up, without saying a word, and removed the cradle, though there was no light in the chamber, as near as she could guess to her daughter's bed, and crept in

to her; when, seeming as if she had been awoke with their noise, she called out to her husband to know what was the matter with him and the gentleman. The husband replied, "Do you not hear what he says he has been doing to-night with Niccolosa?"—"He is a liar," quoth she, "he was never in bed with her, it was I, and I have never closed my eyes since. You are an ass to believe him. You drink to that degree in the evening, that you rave all night long, and go here and there, without knowing anything of the matter, and think you do wonders. It's surprising you don't break your neck. But what is that gentleman doing there? why is he not in his own bed?" Adriano, on the other side, perceiving that the good woman had found a very artful evasion, both for herself and daughter, cried out, "Pinuccio, I have told you a hundred times that you should never lie out of your own house; for that great failing of yours, of walking in your sleep, and telling your dreams for truth, will get you into mischief some time or other. Come back to your own bed, confound you!" The landlord, hearing what his wife and Adriano said, began to think Pinuccio was really dreaming, so he got up and shook him by the shoulders, to rouse him, saying, "Wake up, and get back to your own bed." Pinuccio now began to ramble in his talk, like a man that was dreaming, whereat the host made himself exceedingly merry. At last he seemed to wake, after much ado, and called out, "Hallo! Adriano, is it daylight? what do you wake me for?" —"Yes, yes," said Adriano, "come here, will you?" He, pretending to be very sleepy, got up at last, and went to Adriano. In the morning, the landlord laughed very heartily, and was full of jokes about him and his dreams. So they passed from one merry subject to another, whilst their horses were getting ready, and their portmanteaus tying upon them; when, taking the host's parting cup, they mounted and went to Florence, no less pleased with the manner of the thing's being effected, than with what followed. Afterwards, Pinuccio contrived other means of being with Niccolosa, who still vowed to her mother that he had been dreaming that night; whilst she, well remembering how she had fared with Adriano, thought herself the only person that had been awake.

[This tale has been taken from an old Fabliau of the Trouveur Jean de Boves, entitled 'De Gombert et des deux Clercs.' These two clerks go to get their corn ground. The miller pretends to be from home, and

while they are seeking him through the wood, he purloins the corn, but without their suspecting him of the theft. The night scene corresponds with the 'Decameron,' except that the cradle is removed intentionally, by one of the clerks, in order to entrap the miller's wife: the catastrophe, however, is different; for the miller, during his quarrel with the other clerk, on account of the information he had unconsciously given, strikes a light, and discovers the circumstances in which his wife is placed. He addresses her in terms the most energetic. She answers, that what she had done was undesigned, which is more than he can say of stealing the corn. The 'Reeve's Tale,' in Chaucer, seems to be compounded of the Fabliau and the novel of Boccaccio. It bears the nearest resemblance to the former, but in one or two incidents is different from both, and by no means so ingenious. The story, as related by our author, has been imitated in the 'Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles,' and in the 'Berceau,' of La Fontaine.]

NOVEL VII.

Talano di Molese dreams that a wolf tore his wife's face and throat; and he bids her take care of herself; she disregards his advice, and it happens as he had dreamed.

Pamfilo's novel being concluded, and the good woman's ready wit much commended, the queen turned next to Pampinea, who spoke as follows:—We have had a great deal heretofore upon the subject of dreams, which many people think nothing of; but notwithstanding what has been said, I shall relate what happened, not long since, to a neighbour of mine, for not believing her husband's dream.

I do not know whether you are acquainted with Talano di Molese, a man of great worth. He had a wife, a very handsome woman, but the most fantastical, cross-grained piece of stuff that could be: insomuch, that she would never do anything that was agreeable to other people, neither could anything ever be done to please her: which, though a great affliction to him, Talano was forced to bear with. Now it happened one night, as they were together at a country-house of his, that he dreamed he saw her going through a pleasant grove, not far from his house, when a monstrous fierce wolf seemed to leap from a corner of it, which seized her by the throat, and threw her down, and would have dragged her away, whilst she cried out aloud for help; and upon the wolf's leaving her, it appeared that her face and throat were most miserably torn. In consequence of this dream,

he said to her in the morning, "Wife, though your nasty froward temper would never suffer me to have one happy day with you, yet I should be sorry if any harm was to befall you; therefore, if you would be ruled by me, you would not stir out of your house to-day." Being asked the reason, he related his whole dream; upon which she shook her head and said, "He that means a person ill dreams the same. You express a good deal of concern for me indeed, but you dream only as you could wish it: assure yourself, however, that both now and at all times, I shall be very careful not to give you any such pleasure." Talano replied, "I really guessed what you would say; such thanks a person has for currying a scald head! But think what you will, I spoke it with a good design, and I advise you again to stay at home, or at least not to go into such a grove."—"Well," she replied, "I will oblige you in that."

Afterwards she began to say to herself, "This rogue has been making an assignation with some base woman or other in yonder place, and thinks to frighten me from going thither; I should be blind, indeed, not to see through this artifice; but I will see what sort of cattle they are he is to meet, though I stay the whole day." Having said this, the husband was no sooner out of one door than she went out at the other, posting away to the grove; and being come into the thickest part of it, she stood waiting to see whether anybody came. Continuing upon the watch in this manner, without any fear of the wolf, behold, a monstrous large one rushed out of a close thicket, and seized her by the throat, before she had time, from the first seeing of it, to say so much as, Lord help me! and the brute carried her off as he would a lamb. She could make no noise, because he pinched her throat, nor was she able to help herself in any other manner, so that she must inevitably have been strangled, had not the wolf come in the way of some shepherds, who made a noise, and forced him to quit her. Being known by them, she was carried to her own house, all torn as she was, and was attended by several surgeons, who made a cure at last; yet not in such a manner, but that one side of her face was strangely seamed and disfigured, so that there was an end of her beauty. Afterwards, being ashamed to appear abroad, she lamented all her life long her perverse disposition, in not giving credit, in a point which would have cost her nothing, to that true dream of her husband's.

NOVEL VIII.

Biondello imposes upon one Ciacco with regard to a dinner; who revenges himself afterwards, and causes the other to be soundly beaten.

It was generally agreed, that what Talano had seen in his sleep was no dream, but rather a vision; every part of it having so exactly come to pass. When all were silent, the queen commanded Lauretta to follow, who thereupon said,—As everybody that has spoken hitherto, has given something which has been treated of before, so the severe revenge taken by the scholar, as related by Pampinea, reminds me of another revenge, grievous enough to the person concerned, although less cruel than that was.

In Florence there was a man, the greatest epicure perhaps that ever was born, and for that reason he was nicknamed Ciacco, *i. e.* glutton; who, unable to support the expense which such a craving disposition required, and being in other respects a very agreeable and merry companion, used frequently to go amongst the rich people, such particularly as loved to live well, and dine and sup with them, though perhaps he was not always invited. There was also a little dapper spark called Biondello, a perfect butterfly; so exact and finical always as to his person, that there never was a hair amiss; and he followed the same way of life. Being, therefore, in the fish-market one morning in Lent, and buying a couple of very large lampreys for Signor Vieri de' Ciecchi, he was taken notice of by the other, who immediately asked whom they were for? Biondello replied, "Yesterday Signor Corso Donati had three larger than these sent him along with a sturgeon; but, not thinking them sufficient for all his company, he has ordered me to buy two more: will you not go?"—"You know very well that I shall," said Ciacco. As soon as he thought it was the time, away went Ciacco to Signor Corso's house, and found him talking at the door with some of his neighbours, dinner not being quite ready. Signor Corso asked him whither he was going? "Sir," he replied, "I came to dine with you and your friends."—"You are welcome," said the hospitable gentleman; "it is about the time, then let us go in." So they sat down to some peas, and a few small fried fish, without anything more. Ciacco now saw the trick, and resolved to return it.

A few days afterwards he met with Biondello, who had made many people merry with the thing, and who accosted him, asking how he liked Signor Corso's lampreys? Ciacco replied, "Before eight days are over, you will know much better than I." So the moment he parted from him, he met with a porter, whom he took near to the hall of the Cavicciuli, where shewing him a certain knight named Filippo Argenti, the most boisterous ill-tempered man that could be, he said, "Go, take this bottle in your hand, and say thus to yonder gentleman, 'Sir, Biondello gives his service, and desires you will rubify this flask with some of your best red wine, to treat his friends withal;' but take care he do not lay his hands upon you, for you would have a bad time of it if he should, and my scheme would be quite defeated."—"Must I say anything else?" quoth the porter. "No, only say as I bid you, and when you come here again I will pay you." Accordingly the man delivered his message. Filippo, who was easily heated, imagining that this was done on purpose to enrage him, jumped up in a great passion, and said, "Stay a little, honest friend, and I will give thee what thou comest for;" and was going to lay hold on him; but the man was aware of it, took to his heels, and returned to Ciacco, who saw the whole proceeding, and paid him with a great deal of pleasure.

His next business was to find out Biondello; when he said, "Have you been lately at the Cavicciuli?"—"No," he replied, "but why do you ask the question?"—"Because Filippo has been every where to seek for you; I do not know what it is for."—"Then," said Biondello, "I will go and speak to him." So he went, whilst the other followed at a distance, to see how he would be received. Now Filippo had not yet digested the porter's message, and thinking over and over about it, he concluded it could have no other meaning than that Biondello had a mind to affront him. In the mean time Biondello comes up to him. The moment Filippo saw him, he made at him, and hit him a great thump in the face. "O Lord!" cried Biondello, "what is this for?" Filippo took him by the hair, and threw him upon the ground, saying, "Villain, I will teach thee to crack thy jokes on me." At last, after he had pummelled him almost to a jelly, the people interposed, and rescued him. When they understood what the matter was, they all blamed Biondello for sending such message; telling him, "You should know Filippo better than to exercise any of your wit upon him." Biondello,

crying like a child, protested that he never sent any such message, and departed full of grief to his own house, concluding that this was a trick of Ciacco's. Some time afterwards Ciacco happening to meet him, said, with a laugh, "Well! what think you of Filippo's wine?" "Just as you thought of Corso's lampreys," he replied.—"Whenever you are disposed," quoth Ciacco, "to give me such a dinner, I can give you as good wine as this you have tasted." Biondello, now finding that the other was more than his match, begged to be friends with him, and thenceforth took care to give him no more provocation.

NOVEL IX.

Two young men go to King Solomon for his advice; the one to know how he is to behave in order to be beloved; the other how to manage an untoward wife. To the first, he replies, Love; to the second, Go to Goosebridge.

Only the queen now remained to speak, saving his privilege to Dioneo. After they had laughed at the unfortunate Biondello, she began in this manner:—Whoever rightly considers the order of things, may plainly see that the whole race of woman-kind is by nature, custom, and the laws, made subject to man, to be governed according to his discretion: therefore it is the duty of every one of us, that desires to have ease, comfort, and repose, with those men to whom we may belong, to be humble, patient, and obedient, as well as chaste; which is the great and principal treasure of every prudent woman. And though the laws, which regard the good of the community, may not teach this in every particular, any more than custom, the force of which is very great, and worthy to be esteemed, yet it is plainly showed by nature, who has formed us with delicate and sickly constitutions, our minds timorous and fearful, gentle and compassionate as to our tempers, of little bodily strength, our voices soft and pleasing, and the whole motion of our limbs sweetly pliant, as so many apparent proofs that we stand in need of another's guidance and protection. And whom should we have for our rulers and helpers but men? To them, therefore, let us submit ourselves with all due reverence and honour; and she that shall depart from this, I hold worthy not only of reproof, but severe chastisement. I am led to these reflections by what Pampinea has just now told us of the perverse

wife of Talano, on whom Providence inflicted a heavier judgment than the husband ever could have thought of. Therefore, as I said before, such women as are not mild, gracious, and compassionate, as nature, custom, and the laws, require, are deserving of the greatest punishment; for which reason I shall give you some of Solomon's advice, as a salutary medicine, though I would not have it understood by such as stand in no need of it, as in any way designed for them. Men, indeed, have the following proverb, "A good horse, and a bad one, both require spurs: a good wife, and a bad one, both want a cudgel." These words we will admit to be true, if spoken only by way of mirth and pastime; and even in a moral sense, we will allow that women are naturally prone and unstable, and therefore a stick may be requisite to correct the evil dispositions of some, as well as to support the virtue of others, who behave with more discretion, and to be a terror to prevent them from offending. But to let preaching alone, and to proceed with my story:

The fame of Solomon's most wonderful wisdom, and his affability to such as resorted to him for proofs of it, being carried throughout the whole world, people were daily flocking from all parts to beg his advice in their most urgent affairs. Amongst the rest was a young nobleman of great wealth, called Melisso, who came from the city of Laiazzo, where he was born and dwelt; and as he was riding in haste towards Jerusalem, he happened, going out of Antioch, to fall in with another young gentleman, named Gioseffo, travelling the same road. When they had journeyed for some time together, Melisso, having learned in the course of their conversation who Gioseffo was, and whence he came, inquired whither he was going, and upon what account. Gioseffo replied, "that he was going to King Solomon for advice, what method to take with a most perverse ill-conditioned woman he had married, and whom no entreaties or fair speeches had the least effect upon, to cure her of that temper." He then asked whither his companion was bound, and upon what occasion. Melisso made answer, "I am of Laiazzo, and have an affair that troubles me in like manner; I am rich, and keep a most noble table, entertaining all my fellow-citizens; and yet it is a most unaccountable thing, there is nobody that cares for or respects me: so I am going to the same place, to know what I must do to be beloved."

Thus they rode on together till they came to Jerusalem, where they were introduced to King Solomon by one of his

barons. Melisso briefly set forth his misfortune, and Solomon replied, "Learn to love." Immediately he was showed out of doors, and Gioseffo related his grievance: when Solomon made no reply but this, "Go to Goosebridge." Accordingly he was also dismissed, and coming to Melisso, who was waiting for him without, he told him what was the answer he had received. Thinking much upon the words, and being able to find out no sense or meaning in them, or to draw any use from them, they considered it as all a mockery, and were making the best of their way home again. After travelling some days, they came to a bridge, where they found a great caravan of mules, in process of being laden, and were obliged to stay till they had passed. The greater part was now on the other side; but there was one mule that took fright, and would by no means go over; upon which one of the drivers took a stick and began to beat her gently, in order to make her pass: but she leaped this way, and that way, and sometimes would turn back; therefore, when the driver found her so stubborn, he began to lay on as hard as ever he could strike, but all to no purpose. This our two gentlemen saw, and said to the man, "You sorry rascal! have you a mind to kill the mule? You should lead her gently over; she will go better in that manner than by so much beating." The man replied, "Gentlemen, you know your horses and I know my mule, suffer me then to manage her as I will." And he beat her again, laying on her so thick, that at last he got the better of her, and made her pass. As they were going away, Gioseffo asked a man that was sitting at the end of the bridge, what the name of it was? "Sir," quoth the man, "this place is called Goosebridge." This made him call to mind the words of Solomon; and he said to Melisso, "Now trust me friend, Solomon's counsel may be very good and true; for I never yet beat my wife, but this man has just now shown me what I have to do."

On coming to Antioch, he kept Melisso at his house for some days. Being received by his wife with great joy, he ordered her to dress the supper according to Melisso's direction, who, seeing that it was his friend's will, gave his instructions for that purpose. But she, according to custom, did everything quite the reverse of what Melisso had told her; which Gioseffo saw with a good deal of vexation, and said, "Were not you told in what manner to dress this supper?" She replied, with great disdain, "What is that to you? If you have a mind to eat, do; if not, you may let it alone."

Melisso was surprised at her reply and began to blame her for it. But Gioseffo said, "I find, madam, you are still the same person; but I will make you change your manners." Then, turning to Melisso, he added, "Well, we shall now make trial of Solomon's advice; however, I must beg of you to consider it all as a joke, and not to offer me any hinderance; but remember what the man said when we were pitying his mule." Quoth Melisso, "I am in your house, and shall conform to your pleasure." So Gioseffo took a good oaken stick, and following her into the chamber, whither she was gone in a pet, he began to give her some severe discipline. She cried out and threatened him very much; but finding that he still persisted, she threw herself upon her knees, at last, and begged for mercy, promising that for the future she would always be obedient to his will and pleasure. He continued, nevertheless, laying on till he was weary, so that in short she had not a sound spot about her; and when he had done he came to Melisso, and said, "To-morrow we shall see the effect of the advice to go to Goosebridge. Then he washed his hands, and they sat down to supper, and afterwards, when it was time, they went to repose themselves. The poor lady, who had much trouble to get up from the ground, went and threw herself upon the bed, and betimes in the morning she rose and sent to her husband to know what he would have for dinner. He smiled at this with his friend, and told her. When the time came, therefore, they found everything prepared according to the directions given; upon which they highly commended the advice they had so ill understood.

Some time afterwards Melisso parted from Gioseffo, and went home, when he acquainted a certain wise man in the neighbourhood with what Solomon had told him; who said, "No better or truer advice could possibly be given you; you know that you have a regard for no one person, and that the entertainments you make are for no love you bear those people, but only mere pomp and show Love, then, as Solomon advises, and you shall be beloved." Thus the unruly woman was managed, and the man by loving others came himself to be beloved.

[From all the Italian novelists we hear of the discipline of the stick being exercised by husbands, and it is always mentioned with approbation. In many of the Fabliaux, as 'De la dame qui fut corrigée' (Le Grand, iii, 204), the cudgel chiefly is employed for procuring domestic felicity. It

may, perhaps, appear singular, that an age of which the characteristic was veneration for the fair sex, should have given commencement to a long series of jests founded on the principle that manual discipline is necessary to correct the evil disposition of some wives, and to support the virtue of others. "La mauvaise femme convient il battre, et bonne aussi, à fin qu'elle ne se change," is a maxim inculcated in the romance of 'Milles et Amys,' which was written in the brightest days of chivalry.]

NOVEL X.

Donno Granni undertakes to transform his gossip Pietro's wife into a mare, at his request; but when it comes to putting on the tail, Pietro cries out, and spoils the whole business.

THE queen's novel provoked some murmuring on the part of the ladies, and laughter on that of the gentlemen. When silence was restored Dioneo began thus:—Gracious ladies, one black crow among many white doves will more set off their beauty than the whitest swan could do. In like manner sometimes among many wise persons one of less discretion will serve not only to exalt the splendour of their wisdom but also to afford pleasure and amusement. You are all full of modesty and discretion, and as I am rather scatter-brained, you ought to like me all the better, seeing that I serve as a foil for your perfections; and consequently you ought to allow me more licence than you would to a sager man, to say my say and exhibit myself to you such as I am. I will now give you a novel, not a very long one, from which you may learn how scrupulous one should be in attending to everything directed by a person who undertakes a magic operation, and what a slight fault in that respect may completely spoil the enchantment.

There was last year at Barletta a priest named Donno Gianni di Barolo. His benefice being too poor to maintain him he took to buying and selling at the fairs of Puglia, and hawking goods about on a mare that belonged to him. In this way he became intimate with one Pietro da Tresanti who carried on the same trade with the help of an ass, and whom he always called gossip Pietro, after the manner of that country, by reason of the close friendship between them. Whenever Pietro came to Barletta he took him to his own house, lodged him, and treated him to the best he had. Pietro did the same on his side, but he being a very poor man, and

having only a little cabin at Tresanti, with barely room enough for himself, his handsome young wife, and his ass, and only one little bed, he could not accommodate his guest as he wished. Donno Gianni was therefore obliged to lie on some straw in a very small stable, alongside his mare and the ass. Pietro's wife knowing how well the priest treated her husband at Barletta, had many times proposed to go and sleep with her neighbour Gita Carapresa, and give up her own share of the bed to his reverence, but the latter would never consent to this arrangement. One day among others, he said to her, "Don't make yourself uneasy on my account, gossip Gemmata; I am very well off as I am. There's that mare of mine; whenever I have a mind I turn her into a handsome wench, and afterwards make her a mare again; and so you see I can't think of parting from her." Gemmata fully believed this marvellous tale, and imparted it to her husband. "If the priest and you are so thick together as you tell me," said she, "why does not he teach you to transmogrify me into a mare? With the ass and myself you would make more than double the money you do now, and when we came home you could make me a woman again." Gossip Pietro, who was anything but a knowing one, believed the prodigious story as readily as his wife, and thought her advice very good. Without loss of time he set to work with Donno Gianni, and pressed him hard to teach him the secret. The priest did all he could to drive such nonsense out of his gossip's head, but failing in the attempt, said at last, "Well, since you insist on it, we will get up to-morrow before daylight, and I will show you how the thing is done. The worst part of the business is sticking on the tail, as you will see."

It was little sleep Pietro and Gemmata got that night, so full were their minds of this grand scheme. Long before dawn they were up and calling to Donno Gianni, who coming to them in his shirt, said to gossip Pietro, "I don't know that man in the world for whom I would do this except yourself; but since you have set your heart on it, I can't refuse you. But you must do exactly as I bid you, if you would have the job complete." They both promised this, whereupon Donno Gianni takes a candle and puts it into Pietro's hand, saying: "Mark well everything I do, and take care to recollect the words I utter; but above all things beware of opening your lips, whatever I say or do, unless you want to spoil the whole thing; only pray inwardly

that the tail may be well stuck on." Gossip Pietro took the candle, and vowed that he would observe these instructions.

Then Donno Gianni made Gemmata strip stark naked, and plant herself on all fours like a mare, cautioning her at the same time not to say a word, happen what might. Then he touched her face and head, saying, "Let this be a fine mare's head;" and in the same way with her hair, "Let this be a fine mare's mane;" and so he went on with her arms and legs, breast, back, belly, and sides. Nothing now remained but to stick on the tail. Donno Gianni posted himself behind Gemmata, holding the tail ready made in one hand, and laying the other on her croupe, he—But hardly had he begun when Pietro, who had hitherto watched all the proceedings with great attention and without a word, not liking this part of the ceremony, cried out, "Stop! stop! Donno Gianni, I won't have a tail! I won't have a tail!"—"Oh dear me! gossip Pietro," said the priest, "what have you done? Did not I tell you not to say a word whatever you saw? The mare was all but made, but your talking has undone all, and what is worse, there is no beginning over again."—"It's as well as it is," said Pietro, "I don't choose her to have such a tail as that anyhow. Why did not you tell me to do it myself? Besides you were putting it a deal too low."

"Drat the man!" cried the wife, now getting on her legs: "was there ever such a stupid beast, to go and spoil his own luck and mine? Where did you ever see a mare without a tail? There now you will be as poor as a rat all your life, and serve you right, God knows." Pietro's inopportune exclamation having destroyed all possibility of making a mare of her, Gemmata sadly put on her clothes; and gossip Pietro had to continue his old trade with only an ass as before. He went with Donno Gianni to the fair of Bitonto, but never again required such a service at his hands.

[This story is taken from the Fabliau of the Trouveur Rutebeuf, 'De la Demoiselle qui vouloit voler' (Le Grand, iv, 316), in which a clerk, while pretending to add wings and feathers to a lady, that she might fly, acts in a similar manner with the priest of Darletta. It is La Fontaine's 'La Jument du compère Pierre.']

The novels were now concluded, and the sun began to grow warm, when the queen, knowing that her reign was at an end, arose, and taking the crown from her own head,

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placed it upon Pamfilo's, who was the only person on whom that honour had not yet been conferred, saying, with a smile, "Sir, a very great charge now rests upon you, for, as you are the last, you have to supply my defect, and that of the rest who have been in my place, which I hope you will do." Pamfilo, pleased with the honour done him, replied, "Your virtue, madam, and that of my other subjects, will cause me to receive praise, as well as the rest that have gone before me." So, after giving the usual orders to the master of the household, he turned to the ladies, and said, "It was Emilia's great prudence yesterday to let us choose our own subjects by way of ease; therefore, being now a little recruited, I will that we return to our old law; and for to-morrow the subject shall be of persons who have done some gallant or generous action, either as to love or anything else. The relation of such stories as these will kindle in our minds a generous desire of doing the like; so that our lives, the continuance of which in these frail bodies can be but short, may be made immortal in an illustrious name; which all persons, not devoted to their lustful appetites, like brute beasts, ought, with their whole study and diligence, to covet and seek." The theme was agreeable to the whole assembly; and with the leave of the new king they parted, and went, as they were severally disposed, to divert themselves till supper, when everything was served up with great elegance and order. Afterwards they danced as usual, singing also a thousand songs, more agreeable indeed as to the words than the music: when the king, at last, ordered Neifile to give one relating more to herself, which she did very agreeably in the following manner:

SONG.

Regardful through the meads I stray,
Where flow'rs their various hues display
When all that's sweet and pleasing there,
I to my lover's charms compare.

I pick out such as fairest seem,
And laugh and talk as 'twere to him,
Which, when my am'rous tale is said,
I weave in chaplets for my head.

Whilst thus employ'd an equal joy
I find, as though himself were by:
How great! no language can reveal,
'Tis that my sighs alone must tell:

Which, harshness and distrust apart,
Breathe warm the dictates of my heart;
Such as he ever shall approve,
And meet with equal zeal and love.

The song was much commended by the king, as well as the whole company: and, a good part of the night being spent, they were ordered to go and repose themselves till the next day.

THE TENTH DAY.

Now began certain little clouds, that were in the west, to blush with a vermilion tint, whilst those in the east grew bright at their extremities, like burnished gold, owing to the sunbeams approaching near, and glancing upon them, when Pamfilo arose, and assembled all his company. After concluding whither they were to go, he led the way with an easy pace, attended by Filomena and Fiammetta, the rest all following at a distance, talking of many things relating to their future conduct, and, taking a considerable circuit, they returned, as the sun grew warm, to the palace. There, having plunged their glasses in the clear current, they quaffed their morning draughts, and went amidst the shady walks of the garden, to amuse themselves till dinner. After dining and sleeping as usual, they met where the king appointed, when he laid his first commands on Neifile, who began very pleasantly in this manner:

NOVEL I.

A certain knight in the service of the king of Spain thinks himself not sufficiently rewarded. The king gives a remarkable proof that this was not his fault so much as the knight's ill-fortune, and afterwards nobly requites him.

Behold it, ladies, as a singular favour, that the king has appointed me to speak first on so noble a subject as that of magnanimity, which, as the sun is the glory of heaven, is the ornament and lustre of every other virtue. I shall relate, therefore, a pleasant novel enough, in my opinion, and which can be no other than useful.

Know, then, that amongst other worthy knights of our city was one Ruggieri de' Figiovanni, whose worth and valour made him equal at least to the best, and who, finding, according to the dispositions of his countrymen, that he had no opportunity of showing his courage at home, resolved to go into the service of Alfonso, king of Spain, the most celebrated prince of his time. So he went, attended with an honourable train, and was most graciously received by the king, to whom he soon made his merit known, as well by his gallant way of life, as his glorious feats of arms. Continuing some time there, and having particular regard to every action of the king's, he found that he gave away castles, cities, and baronies, sometimes to one, and sometimes to another, without the least judgment, and where there was no show of merit in the case, and that he came in for no part himself. Therefore, being sensible of his own worth, and fearful lest his character should suffer by such an oversight, he took the resolution to depart, desiring the king's leave, which was granted him. His majesty also made him a present of a fine mule, which was very acceptable, on account of the long journey he had to perform. After this, the king instructed one of his servants to contrive to fall in with the knight upon the road, but in such a manner that the latter should have no suspicion who sent him, when he was to note what he should say concerning the king, in order to carry a full account back, and the next morning he was to command Ruggieri's return with him to the king. Accordingly, the servant waited for the knight's departure, and soon joined him, giving him to understand that he was going towards Italy. Thus they rode on, chatting together, the knight mounted upon the mule which the king had given him; and it being now about three o'clock, he said, "We should do well to give our beasts a little rest." This being agreed on, they put them up in a stable, when they all staled except the mule. Going on afterwards, the servant attentive all the time to the knight's words, they came to a river, where, as they watered all their beasts, the mule chanced to stale in the river. When the knight saw this, he said, "Plague on thee, for an ill-conditioned beast; thou art just like thy master that gave thee to me." The servant took particular notice of this, and though he had picked up many things upon the road, there was no other but what redounded to the king's credit; so the next morning, as soon as they had mounted their horses, and were

setting out for Italy, he delivered the king's mandate, upon which the knight immediately turned back.

The king being informed what Ruggieri had said concerning the mule, had him brought before him, and receiving him with a cheerful countenance, asked why the mule and he were compared to each other. Ruggieri very frankly replied, "It is, my lord, because you give where you ought not, and where you ought, there you give nothing; just as the mule would not stale where she should, but did it where she should not." "Believe me, Signor Ruggieri," replied the king, "if I have not given to you as I have done to divers others, who are no way your equals, this happened not because I have not known you to be a valiant knight, and deserving of all I could do for you, but it was entirely your ill fortune, as I will soon convince you."—"My lord," answered the knight, "I do not complain because I have yet received nothing from your majesty, out of any desire of becoming richer, but only for that you have in no wise borne testimony to my merits; and, though I hold your excuse to be good, I should yet be glad to see what you promise to show me, notwithstanding I want no such proof."

The king then led him into a great hall, where, as he had before given orders, stood two large coffers. Then said the king, in the presence of many of his lords, "Sir Knight, in one of these coffers is my imperial crown, sceptre, globe, with all the best jewels that I have; the other is filled only with earth. Choose then which you will, and it shall be yours: so you will see whether it is I that am ungrateful to your merit, or whether it is your ill fortune." Ruggieri, seeing it was the king's pleasure, made choice of one of the coffers, which the king ordered to be opened, and it was found full of earth; upon which the king laughed, and said, "You see now, sir, that what I said of your fortune is true; but most assuredly your valour deserves that I interpose in the case. I know very well that you have no desire to become a Spaniard, for which reason I would give you neither castle nor city; but this chest, which your ill fortune deprived you of, I will shall be yours, in despite of her. Take it home with you, that you may value yourself upon your virtue amongst your neighbours and friends, by this testimony of my bounty." The knight received it, and, after returning his majesty the thanks that were due for such a present, departed joyfully therewith to his native country.

[The rudiments of this story may be traced back as far as to the romance of 'Josaphat and Barlaam.']

NOVEL II.

Ghino di Tacco takes the Abbot of Cligni prisoner, cures him of a pain in his stomach, and then sets him at liberty. The abbot returns to the court of Rome, and through his mediation Ghino is reconciled with Pope Boniface, and made prior of a hospital.

ALFONSO's magnificence having been much applauded, the king, who seemed more particularly pleased with it, laid his next commands upon Eliza, and she immediately said:—For a king to be munificent, and to give proofs of it to a person that had served him, must be allowed to be great and commendable. But what will you say to the wonderful generosity of a clergyman, towards one too that was his enemy; can anything be objected to that? Nothing surely can be said less than this; that if the one was a virtue in a king, the other in a churchman was a perfect prodigy; inasmuch as they are for the most part more sordid than even women, and avowed enemies to every kind of generosity. And although it is natural to desire revenge, they, notwithstanding their preaching up patience, and recommending the forgiveness of injuries to others, pursue it with more rancour than other people. This thing, therefore (I mean the generosity of a certain prelate), will be made appear in the following story.

Ghino di Tacco was a man famous for his bold and insolent robberies, who being banished from Siena, and at utter enmity with the counts di Santa Fiore, caused the town of Radicofani to rebel against the Church, and lived there, whilst his gang robbed all who passed that way. Now, when Boniface the Eighth was pope, there came to court the abbot of Cligni, reputed to be one of the richest prelates in the world, and having impaired his stomach with high living, he was advised by his physicians to go to the baths of Siena, as a certain cure. Having leave from the pope, the abbot set out with a goodly train of coaches, carriages, horses, and servants, paying no respect to the rumours concerning this robber. Ghino was apprised of his coming, and took his measures accordingly; when, without the loss of a man, he inclosed the abbot and his whole retinue in a narrow defile, whence it was impossibe for them to escape. This being done he sent one of his principal fellows to the abbot, with his service, requesting he would do him the favour to alight, and visit him at his castle. The abbot replied, with a great deal of pas-

sion, that he had nothing to do with Ghino, but that his resolution was to go on, and he would see who dared stop him. "My lord," quoth the man, with a great deal of humility, "you are now in a place where all excommunications are kicked out of doors, so please to oblige my master in this thing; it will be your best way."

Whilst they were talking together, the place was soon surrounded with highwaymen, and the abbot, seeing himself a prisoner, went with a great deal of ill-will with the fellow to the castle, followed by his whole retinue, where he dismounted, and was lodged, by Ghino's appointment, in a poor, dark little room, whilst every other person was well accommodated according to his respective station, and the carriages and all the horses taken exact care of. This being done, Ghino went to the abbot, and said, "My lord, Ghino, whose guest you are, requests the favour of you to let him know whither you are going, and upon what account?" The abbot was wise enough to lay all his haughtiness aside for the present, and satisfied him with regard to both. Ghino went away on hearing this; and having made up his mind that he would cure his lordship without a bath, he ordered a great fire to be kept constantly in his room, coming to him no more till next morning, when he brought him two slices of toasted bread, in a fine napkin, and a large glass of his own rich white wine, saying to him, "My lord, when Ghino was young he studied physic, and he declares that the very best medicine for a pain in the stomach is what he has now provided for you, of which these things are to be the beginning. Then take them, and have a good heart." The abbot, whose hunger was much greater than was his will to joke, ate the bread, though with a great deal of indignation, and drank the glass of wine, after which he began to talk a little arrogantly, asking many questions, and demanding more particularly to see this Ghino. But Ghino passed over part of what he said as vain, and the rest he answered very courteously, declaring that Ghino meant to make him a visit very soon, and then left him. The abbot saw him no more till next morning, when he brought him as much bread and wine as before, and in the same manner. And thus he continued doing many days, till he found the abbot had eaten some dried beans, which he had left purposely in the chamber, when he inquired of him, as from Ghino, how he found his stomach? The abbot replied, "I should be well enough if I were out of this man's clutches. There is nothing I want now so much as to eat, for his med-

icines have had such an effect upon me, that I am ready to die with hunger."

Ghino, then, having furnished a room with the abbot's own goods, and provided an elegant entertainment, to which many people of the town were invited, as well as the abbot's own domestics, went the next morning to him, and said, "My lord, now you find yourself recovered, it is time for you to quit this infirmary." So he took him by the hand, and leading him into the chamber, left him there with his own people. Whilst Ghino was away giving orders about the feast, the abbot gave his people an account of the life he had led in that place, they on the other hand declaring that they had been used by Ghino with all possible respect. When the time came, they sat down, and were nobly entertained, but still without Ghino's making himself known. After the abbot had been treated for some days in that manner, Ghino had all the goods and furniture brought into a large room, and the horses were likewise led into a court-yard which was under it. Then he inquired how his lordship now found himself, and whether he was yet able to ride. The abbot made answer, that he was strong enough, and his stomach perfectly well, and that he only wanted to be quit of this man. Ghino then brought him into the room where all his goods were, and leading him also to the window, that he might take a view of his horses, he said, "My lord, you must understand it was no evil disposition, but his being driven a poor exile from his own house, and persecuted by many enemies, that forced Ghino di Tacco, whom you see before you, to be a robber upon the highways, and an enemy to the court of Rome. You seem, however, to be a person of honour; since, therefore, I have cured you of your weakness of stomach, I do not mean to treat you as I would do another person that should fall into my hands, that is, to take what I please; but I would have you consider my necessity, and then give me what you will yourself. Here is all that belongs to you; the horses you may see out of the window: take either part or the whole, just as you are disposed, and go or stay, as is most agreeable to you."

The abbot was surprised to hear a highwayman talk in so courteous a manner which did not a little please him; so, turning all his former passion and resentment into kindness and good-will, he ran with a heart full of friendship to embrace him: "I protest solemnly, that to procure the friendship of such a one as I take you to be, I would undergo

more than what you have already made me suffer. Cursed be that evil fortune which has thrown you into this way of life!" So taking only a few of his most necessary things, and also of his horses, and leaving all the rest, he came back to Rome.

The pope had heard of the abbot's being a prisoner, and though he was much concerned at it, yet upon seeing him, he inquired what benefit he had received from the baths? The abbot replied, with a smile, "Holy father, I found a physician much nearer, who has cured me exceedingly well," and he told him the manner of it, which made the pope laugh heartily. Then, going on with his story, and moved by a truly generous spirit, he requested of his holiness one favour. The pope, imagining he would ask something else, freely consented to grant it. Then said the abbot, "Holy father, what I have to ask is, that you would bestow a free pardon on Ghino di Tacco, my doctor, because, of all the people of worth that I ever met with, he certainly is most to be esteemed, and the damage he does is more the fault of fortune than himself. Change but his condition, and give him something to live upon, according to his rank and station, and I dare say you will have the same opinion of him that I have." The pope, being of a noble spirit, and a great encourager of merit, promised to do so, if he was such a person as the abbot reported, and, in the mean time, gave letters of safe conduct for his coming hither. Upon that assurance, Ghino came to court, when the pope was soon convinced of his worth, and reconciled to him, giving him the priory of an hospital, and creating him a knight. And there he continued as a friend and loyal servant to the holy church, and to the abbot of Cligni, as long as he lived.

NOVEL III.

Mithridanes envies the generosity of Nathan, and goes to kill him, when, conversing with him, but not knowing him, and being informed in what manner he may do the deed, he goes to meet him in a wood, as Nathan had directed. There he recognises him, is ashamed, and becomes his friend.

THE abbot's extraordinary generosity seemed almost a miracle to all that heard it. Then Filostrato was commanded to speak, who instantly said,—Great, most noble ladies, was the magnificence of the King of Spain, and that of the abbot

of Cligni something quite unusual; but perhaps it will appear no less strange to you to be told how a person, as a proof of his liberality to another, who thirsted after his blood, nay, and his very soul too, should contrive industriously to gratify him. And he would have done so, if the other would have taken what was so offered, as I am going to show you.

Most certain it is, if any faith may be given to the Genoese, and others who have been there, that in the country of Cattaio lived a person of noble descent, and rich beyond comparison, called Nathan, who, having an estate adjoining to the great road which led from the east to the west, and being of a generous spirit, and desirous of showing it by his good works, summoned together many master artificers, and in a very short time raised one of the most grand and beautiful palaces that ever was seen, furnishing it with everything necessary for the more honourable reception of persons of distinction. He had also great numbers of servants, and kept open house for all comers and goers, continuing this noble way of living, till not only the east, but the west also, resounded with his fame. He had now grown into years, his hospitality remaining unabated, when it happened that his renown reached the ears of a young gentleman, named Mithridanes, living in an adjacent country, who, thinking himself full as wealthy as Nathan, began to envy his fame and virtue, resolving to extinguish or obscure them both by a superior generosity. So he built such another palace as Nathan's and was so extravagantly generous to everybody, that how famous he soon became it is needless to say.

Now one day it happened, as he was all alone in his palace-court, that a woman came in at one of the gates, and demanded alms, which she received; after which she came in at a second, and was relieved a second time, and so on for twelve times successively. On her returning the thirteenth, he said, "Good woman, you grow troublesome;" but yet he gave her. The old woman, on hearing these words, said, "O the prodigious generosity of Nathan! How greatly is it to be admired! I went in at all the thirty-two gates which there are to his palace, as well as this, and received an alms at every one, without being known all the time, as it seemed to me; and here I come but thirteen times, and am known and flouted!" and away she went, and never was seen there more. Mithridanes, imagining that what he heard of Nathan was a diminution of his own fame, grew extremely incensed,

and said, "Alas! when shall I equal Nathan in great things, not to say surpass him, as is my desire, when I fall short even in the smallest matters? Undoubtedly, it is all labour in vain, unless I dismiss him from the world, which, seeing old age ineffectual, I must do instantly with my own hands." So rising up in a passion, without making any one acquainted with his design, he mounted his horse, taking very few attendants with him; and the third day he arrived at Nathan's palace, when he ordered his people not to seem to belong to him, but provide themselves with lodgings till they heard farther from him.

Coming there towards the evening, and being left by himself, he found Nathan alone, not far from his palace, taking a walk for his amusement, in a very plain habit, when he, not knowing him, desired he would show him the way to Nathan's dwelling. Nathan cheerfully replied, "Son, there is nobody in this country can show you better than myself; then, if you please, I will conduct you thither." The young gentleman replied, "I should be extremely obliged to you: but could wish, if it were possible, neither to be seen nor known by Nathan."—"This also," quoth Nathan, "I will do for you, if it be your design." So he alighted, and walked along with him, falling agreeably into discourse together, till they came to the palace, when Nathan bade one of his servants take the horse, and he whispered in the fellow's ear for him to acquaint all the people in the house that none of them should let the gentleman know he was Nathan, which was done. Being entered into the palace, he put Mithridanes into a very fine apartment, where nobody should see him but those whom he had appointed to wait upon him, and showed him all possible respect, himself constantly keeping him company. After Mithridanes had been for some time with him, he asked with a great deal of reverence, who he was. "I am an inferior servant of Nathan's," he replied, "who has grown old in his service, and yet he never promoted me to anything more than what you see; and therefore, though other people commend him, I have little reason to do so."

These words gave Mithridanes some hopes that he might the better and more securely effect his base purpose. Nathan then inquired very courteously of him concerning what he was, and the occasion of his coming thither, offering him his best advice and assistance. Mithridanes hesitated a little upon that, but at length resolved to let him into his design;

so, after a long preamble requesting secrecy, and that he would lend a helping hand, he declared who he was, what he came thither for, and his inducement. Nathan, hearing his detestable resolution, was quite changed within himself; nevertheless, without any appearance thereof, he replied boldly, and with a steady countenance, "Mithridanes, your father was truly a noble person, nor are you willing to degenerate, having undertaken so glorious an enterprise as is that of being liberal to all people; I do greatly commend the envy you bear to Nathan's virtue, because, were there many more men of the same principle, the world, though bad enough at present, would soon grow better. Your affair I shall most assuredly keep secret, which I can further more by my advice, than any help I am able to give you, and that in the following manner:—About half a mile from hence is a grove, where he generally takes a walk for a considerable time every morning; there you may easily meet with him, and do what you purpose. If you should kill him, in order to return home without any hindrance, do not go the way you came, but take a path that leads out of the grove to the left, which, though not so much frequented as the other, is yet a shorter way to your house, as well as more secure." When Mithridanes had received this instruction, and Nathan was departed, he let his attendants, that were in the same house, know privately where they were to wait for him the next day.

Early in the morning Nathan arose, his mind being no way changed from the counsel given to Mithridanes, and went to the grove with a design of meeting with his death. Mithridanes also took his bow and sword, having no other weapon, and rode to the same place, where he saw Nathan walking at a distance by himself, and being minded before he put him to death, to hear what he had to say, he laid hold of the turban that was upon his head, and cried out, "Old dotard! thou art a dead man." Nathan made no reply but this: "Then I have deserved it." Mithridanes, hearing his voice, and looking in his face, found it was the same person that had so kindly received him, kept him company, and faithfully advised him: upon which his rage and malice were turned into shame and remorse; and throwing away his sword, which he had ready drawn to stab him, he dismounted and fell with tears at his feet, saying, "My dearest father, I am now convinced of your liberality, considering what pains you have taken to bestow your life upon me, which I was very unjustly desirous of having. But God, more careful of my doing my

duty than I was myself, opened the eyes of my understanding, which envy had closed, at a time when there was the greatest need of it. The more ready, therefore, you were to oblige me, so much the greater I acknowledge my remorse to be. Take that revenge, then, of me which you think adequate to the nature of my crime." Nathan raised him up, and embraced him, saying, "Son, your design, call it wicked, or what you will, needs neither your asking any pardon nor yet my granting it; because it was out of no hatred, but only a desire to excel. Be assured, then, there is nobody regards you more than I do, considering the greatness of your soul, which was given you not for the amassing of wealth, as is the case of misers, but the distribution of it; be not ashamed of your design of cutting me off, to become more famous, nor think I am at all surprised at it; the greatest monarchs, by no other art than that of killing not one man only, as you would have done, but infinite numbers, destroying whole countries, and laying cities in ruins, have enlarged their empire, and consequently their fame. Therefore, to kill me alone, to make yourself famous, is neither new nor strange."

Mithridanes, far from excusing his evil intent, but commending Nathan's honest gloss upon it, proceeded so far as to tell him that he wondered exceedingly how he could bring himself to such readiness to die, and be even advising and aiding to it. Nathan replied, "I would not have you wonder at all at it; for ever since I have been my own master, and resolved to do that wherein you have endeavoured to follow my example,—nobody ever came to my house whom I did not content to the utmost of my power, as to what was required of me. Now it was your fortune to come for my life; therefore that you should not be the only person who went away ungratified, I resolved to give it, advising you in such a manner that you might be secure of it without losing your own. Therefore I conjure you to take it, if it will be any pleasure to you: I do not know how I can better bestow it. Eighty years have I had the full enjoyment of it; and, according to the course of nature, and as it fares with other men, and all other things, I can keep it but very little longer: so I hold it better to part with it of my own accord, as I have done with my wealth and estate, than to keep it till it is wrested from me by nature. A hundred years are really no great matter: what, then, are six or eight, which are all that are left me? Take it, then, I say again, if you please; for I never met with any one before that desired it,

nor do I expect any other will accept it, if you do not. Besides, the longer it is kept, of the less value it grows; so take it once for all, whilst it is worth something." Mithridanes was extremely confounded, and said, "God forbid, that, so far from touching a thing of the value your life is, I should even desire it as I did just now. Instead of lessening your years, I would willingly add to them of my own, if it were possible."—"And would you," he replied, "if you could? That would be doing to you what I have done yet to no one, I mean robbing you to enrich myself. But I will tell you what you shall do: you shall come and live here, and be called Nathan, and I will go to your house, and take the name of Mithridanes."—"If I knew how to behave as well as you do," said Mithridanes, "I should readily embrace your offer; but as I am sensible I should only lessen the fame of Nathan, I shall never seek to impair that in another which I cannot increase in myself: so pray excuse me." With these, and more such compliments, they returned to the palace, where Nathan showed great respect to Mithridanes, confirming him in his great and noble design; and the latter, being disposed to return home, took his leave, fully convinced that he could never come up to Nathan in liberality.

NOVEL IV.

Signor Gentil de' Carisendi takes a lady out of her grave, whom he had loved, and who was buried for dead. She recovers, and is brought to bed of a son, which he presents along with the lady to her husband.

It seemed strange to them all for a man to be so lavish of his blood, and it was agreed that Nathan had outdone both the king of Spain and the abbot of Cligni. The king then signified his will to Lauretta that she should begin, which she did to this effect:—Great, as well as beautiful, most noble ladies, are the incidents which have been already related, nor does anything seem wanting, in my opinion, to bring our argument home to the subject, but that we take in the affair of love, which affords matter enough for discourse upon any question whatever. For this reason, then, and as it is always an agreeable topic to youth, I shall mention the generosity of an enamoured young gentleman, which, all things considered, will appear, perhaps, no way inferior to the others: if it be true that people give away their wealth, forget animosities,

run a thousand risks of their lives, and, what is more, their fame and honour too, and all to come at the thing desired.

In Bologna was a knight, of great consequence and worth, called Gentil Carisendi, who was in love with Catalina, the wife of Niccoluccio Caccianimico, and meeting with no return, he went, in a kind of despair, to Modena, whither he was called as Podesta. In the mean time, Niccoluccio being absent from Bologna, and his lady at a country-house about three miles distant, where she was gone to stay, being with child, it happened she was taken with an hysteric fit, which quite extinguished all signs of life, so that her physician declared her dead. And because her acquaintance said, they had been informed by her that she was not quick with child, she was immediately buried in a vault belonging to a neighbouring church. This was soon signified by a friend to Signor Gentil, who, though he had never received the least mark of her favour, grieved extremely, saying at last to himself, "Behold, my dear Catalina, you are dead! living you would never deign me one kind look; now, however, that you cannot prevent it, I will please myself even with a kiss."

So, giving orders that his departure should be a secret, towards evening he mounted his horse, and taking a servant along with him, he rode directly to the vault where she was buried, which he opened, and lying down by her, he put his cheek to hers, and wept. At length, laying his hands for some time upon her bosom, he thought he felt something beat, when, throwing all fear aside, and attending more nicely to the circumstance, he was convinced she had a small spark of life remaining in her; therefore, by the help of his servant, he took her out of the vault as gently as possible, and, laying her upon the horse, he brought her privately to his house at Bologna. There his mother, a worthy good lady, having the whole account from him, by warm baths and other means, soon brought her to herself; when, after fetching a deep sigh, she said, "Alas! where am I!" The good lady replied, "Make yourself easy, you are in a very good place." Looking then all round, and seeing Signor Gentil before her, her astonishment was great, and she desired his mother to inform her by what means she had come thither. He then related everything to her, at which she was greatly affected, and, after giving due thanks, she requested of him, by his love and generous deportment, to attempt nothing contrary to her honour and that of her husband, and that, when it was day-

light, he would suffer her to go home. "Madam," he replied, "whatever my love has been heretofore, I promise both now and hereafter, seeing I have been so fortunate to bring you to life, to use you with the same regard as I would do my sister: but, as I think myself entitled to some reward, I must insist upon your granting me one favour."—"Sir," said she, "you may command anything from me consistent with modesty." He made answer, "Madam, your relations and all the people of Bologna are assured of your being dead; therefore I insist only upon your staying here with my mother till I return from Modena, which will be very soon. My reason is, that I would then, in the presence of the principal inhabitants here, make a valuable and solemn present of you to your husband." The lady, knowing her obligations to the knight, and that his demand was honourable, consented, and gave her word to abide by it, notwithstanding she longed extremely to gratify her relations with the news of her being alive. And whilst they were talking, she felt labour-pains come upon her, when she was soon delivered of a son, which added greatly to their joy. Signor Gentil ordered that she should have the same care taken of her as if she had been his own wife, and then returned privately to Modena. There he continued till the expiration of his office, and the morning he was to come home, he ordered a great entertainment to be made at his house, to which Niccoluccio Caccianimico, with many of the principal citizens were invited; and after he had dismounted, and found the company waiting for him, understanding too that the lady and child were both very well, he received them all with a great deal of joy, and dinner was immediately served up in the most magnificent manner possible.

Towards the end, having concerted everything beforehand with the lady, he addressed himself to his guests in the following manner: "Gentlemen, I remember to have heard of a pretty custom in Persia, that when any one has a mind to show the greatest respect in his power to any of his friends, that he invites them to his house, and produces that thing, be it what it will, wife, mistress, or daughter, that is most dear to him, declaring thereby that he would, if he was able, lay his very heart before them. This custom I mean to introduce at Bologna. You do me honour with your company at this feast, and I will return it, by showing that thing which is the most dear to me of all that I have now in the world, or ever shall possess. But I must beg your solution of a

difficulty which I am going to start to you. A certain person had a very honest and trusty servant, who was taken extremely ill, whom, without more to do, he sent out into the street in that condition, when a stranger, out of mere compassion, took him into his house, and with a great deal of trouble and expense, had him restored to his former health. —Now I would gladly know whether the first master has any right to complain of the second, for keeping him in his service, and refusing to restore him." This occasioned a great deal of argument, and all agreed at last in opinion, leaving Niccoluccio Caccianimico, who was an elegant speaker, to report it. He, therefore, after commending the Persian custom, said, "they were all persuaded that the first master had no farther right, after he had not only abandoned his servant, but thrown him away as it were; and that, on account of the kindness done to him, he justly belonged to the second, who offered no violence or injury to the first in detaining him." The rest of the company, being all wise and worthy persons, declared that they joined in opinion with Niccoluccio. The knight, pleased with the answer, and having it too from Niccoluccio, declared that those were his own sentiments, adding, "It is now time for me to honour you according to promise."

He then sent two servants to the lady, whom he had taken care to have very gaily dressed, desiring her to favour his guests with her company. Accordingly, she came into the hall, followed by the two servants, with the little infant in her arms. And after she had seated herself, he said, "Behold, this is what I value beyond everything else; see if you think I am in the right." The gentlemen all praised her extremely, pronouncing her worthy of his esteem; and, after looking more nicely at her, many of them were going to have owned her, had it not been that they thought her dead. But none gazed upon her so much as Niccoluccio, who (the knight having stepped a little aside) grew impatient to know who she was, and, unable any longer to contain himself, demanded of her if she was a citizen or a stranger? The lady, hearing this from her husband, could scarcely refrain from giving him an answer, yet, in regard to her injunctions, she held her peace. Another inquired whether that was her child; and a third, whether she was wife, or any relation, to Signor Gentil. Still she made no reply to any. So when the knight returned, one of the company said, "Sir, this is really a pretty creature, but she appears to be dumb: is she

actually so?"—"Gentlemen," he replied, "her silence is no small argument of her virtue."—"Tell us then," quoth one, "who she is."—"That I will," said the knight, "with all my heart, if you will promise me in the mean time that none of you stir from your places till I have made an end."

This being agreed, and the tables all removed, he went and sat down by her, saying, "Gentlemen, this lady is that good and faithful servant, about whom I proposed the question; who, being set at nought by her friends, and thrown into the street, as it were, as a thing of no account, was by me with great care taken up, and redeemed from death; and from so terrible an object as she once was, brought to what you now see. But, for your more perfect understanding of what has happened, I will make it plain to you in few words." So he began from his being first enamoured, and related everything particularly that had happened, to the great amazement of the hearers; adding, at last, "For these reasons, if you stick to what you said just now, and Niccoluccio especially, the lady is mine, and nobody has any right to demand her from me." No reply was made to this, but all stood expecting to hear what he had farther to say. In the mean time, Niccoluccio and the rest of the company, as well as the lady, were so affected, that they all wept. But Signor Gentil arose, and taking the child in his arms, and the lady by the hand, he went towards Niccoluccio, and said, "Rise, my friend, behold, I do not give you your wife, whom you and your relations had thrown away, but I bestow this lady upon you, as an acquaintance of mine, along with her little son, which is yours, and whom I have called by my own name; and I entreat you not to have the worse opinion of her, for having been three months in my house; for I call Heaven to witness, that though my love was the cause of her being preserved, she has lived with the same honour in my house, along with my mother, as she could have done with her own parent." Then, turning to the lady, he said, "Madam, I now acquit you of your promise, and give you up freely to your husband." So giving him the lady and the child into his arms, he returned, and sat down. Niccoluccio received them with joy, the greater, as it was the more unexpected, loading the knight with infinite thanks, whilst the company, who could not refrain from weeping, highly commended his generosity, as did every one also that heard it. The lady now was brought to her own house with great demonstrations of joy, and the people all beheld her with

the same wonder as if she had been raised from the dead. Moreover, the knight was in the greatest esteem ever after, both with her and Niccoluccio, as well as all their relations and friends.

What will you say, then, ladies? Is a king's giving away his crown and sceptre, an abbot's reconciling a malefactor to the pope, or an old man's offering his throat to an enemy's dagger, anything like this action of Signor Gentil's? who, being in the bloom and heat of youth, and seeming to have a good title to that which other people's carelessness had thrown away, and he by good fortune happened to pick up, not only restrained his desire, much to his honour, but generously resigned what he had entirely coveted, and sought at all events to possess. To me they seem no way comparable.

NOVEL V.

Dianora requires Ansaldo to present her with a garden in January as beautiful as in May. He engages a necromancer to do it. Her husband, upon this, gives her leave to keep her word with Ansaldo, who hearing of her husband's generosity, acquits her of her promise, and the necromancer likewise takes nothing for his trouble.

Signor Gentil having been extolled to the very skies by the whole assembly, the king ordered Emilia to follow; and immediately, as though she were desirous of speaking, she began in this manner:—There is no one but must allow that Signor Gentil did a very noble action, but to say that nothing greater could be done, is saying too much, as I shall show in a very short novel.

In the country of Frioli, which, though very cold, is yet beautified with many pleasant mountains, fine rivers and crystal springs, is a place called Udine, where lived a worthy lady, named Dianora, the wife of a very agreeable man, and one of great wealth, called Gilberto. Now she had taken the fancy of a great and noble lord, called Ansaldo, one of extraordinary generosity and prowess, and known all over the country, who used frequently to solicit her with messages and offers of love, but in vain. At length, being quite wearied with his importunities, and seeing that he still persisted, notwithstanding her repeated denials, she resolved to rid herself of him by a novel, and, as she thought, impossible demand. So she said to his emissary one day, "Good woman, you have

often told me that Ansaldo loves me beyond all the world, and have offered me great presents on his part, which he may keep to himself, for I shall never be prevailed upon to a compliance in that manner. Could I be assured, indeed, that his love is really such as you say, then I should certainly be brought to return it: therefore, if he will convince me of that by a proof which I shall require, I will instantly be at his service."—"What is it, then," quoth the good woman, "that you desire him to do?"—"It is this," she replied: "I would have a garden in the month of January, which is now coming on, as full of green herbs, flowers, and trees laden with fruit, as though it were the month of May: unless he does this for me, charge him to trouble me no more, for I will instantly complain to my husband, and all my friends."

Ansaldo being made acquainted with this demand, which seemed an impossibility, and knowing that it was contrived on purpose to deprive him of all hopes of success, resolved yet to try all possible means in such a case, sending to every part of the world to find out a person able to assist him. At length he met with a magician, who would undertake it for a large sum of money; and having agreed upon a price, he waited impatiently for the time of its being done. On the night of the first of January, therefore, the cold being extreme, and everything covered with snow, this wise man so employed his art in a meadow near to the city, that in the morning there appeared there one of the finest gardens that ever was seen, filled with all kinds of herbs, flowers, trees, and fruits. Ansaldo beheld this marvellous creation with infinite pleasure, and picking some of the fairest fruit and flowers, he sent them privately to the lady, inviting her to come and see the garden which she had required, that she might be convinced of his love and fulfil the promise she had made, as became a woman of her word. The lady, seeing the flowers and fruits present, and having already heard from many people of this wonderful garden, began to repent of what she had done. But with all this repentance, being still desirous of seeing strange sights, she went thither with many more ladies, and having highly commended it, returned home very sorrowful, thinking of her engagement. Her trouble was too great to be concealed or dissembled, so that her husband at last perceived it, and demanded the reason. For some time she was ashamed to speak, but being constrained at last, she related the whole thing. Gilberto was greatly incensed about it, till, considering the upright intention of his lady in

the affair, he began to be somewhat pacified, and said, "Dianora, it is not the act of a wise and virtuous lady to receive any messages, or make any conditions in regard to her chastity. Words have a more ready admittance to the heart than many people imagine, and with lovers nothing is impossible. You were highly to blame first to listen, and afterwards to covenant; but, as I know the purity of your intention, and to free you from your engagement, I will grant what nobody else would do in such a case. For fear of this necromancer, who, by Ansaldo's instigation, may do us some mischief if you disappoint him, I consent that you go to Ansaldo, and if you can by any means get quit of that tie with safety to your honour, that you endeavour to do so; otherwise that you comply in deed, though your will be chaste and pure." The poor lady wept bitterly, and showed great reluctance, but he insisted upon her doing as he said. So, early in the morning, without any great care to make herself fine, she went with her woman and two men-servants to Ansaldo's house. He was greatly surprised at hearing the lady was there, and said to the wise man, "You shall now see the effect of your skill." So he went to meet her, and showed her into a handsome room, where there was a great fire, and after they had sat down, "Madam," he said, "I beg, if the long regard I have had for you merit any reward, that you would please to tell me why you come here at this time, and thus attended." She blushed, and replied, with eyes full of tears, "Sir, it is neither from love, nor from regard to my promise, but merely by my husband's order, who, showing more respect to the labours of your inordinate love than to his honour and mine, has forced me to come hither; therefore, as it is his command, I submit to your pleasure." If Ansaldo was surprised at the sight of the lady, he was now much more so at hearing her talk thus; and, being moved with Gilberto's generosity, his love was changed into compassion. "Madam," he said, "Heaven forbid that I should ever take away the honour of a person who has showed such pity for my love: therefore, you are as safe with me, as if you were my sister, and you may depart, when it seems good to you, upon condition that you tender your husband, in my name, those thanks which you think are due to his great generosity, requesting him, for the time to come, to esteem me always as his brother and faithful servant." The lady, overjoyed with this, replied, "All the world, sir, could never

make me believe, when I consider your character, that anything could have happened on my coming hither, otherwise that it has now done; for which I shall always be profoundly grateful to you." She then took her leave, returned to her husband, and told him what had happened, and this proved the occasion of a strict friendship ever after between him and Ansaldo.

The necromancer now being about to receive his reward, and having observed Gilberto's generosity to Ansaldo, and that of Ansaldo to the lady, said, "As Gilberto has been so liberal of his honour, and you of your love, you shall give me leave to be the same with regard to my pay: knowing it then to be worthily employed, I design it shall be yours." Ansaldo was ashamed, and pressed him to take all or part, but in vain. On the third day, the necromancer having made his garden vanish, and being ready to depart, Ansaldo thankfully dismissed him, having extinguished his inordinate desires, purely from a principle of honour. What say you now, ladies? Shall we prefer the dead lady, and the love of Gentil, grown cold, as destitute of all hope, to the liberality of Ansaldo, who loved more than ever, and who was fired with the greater expectation, since the prey so long pursued was then in his power? It seems to me mere folly to compare the generosity of Gentil with that of Ansaldo.

[Manni observes, that this novel was probably founded on a story current in the age of Boccaccio (and subsequently mentioned by Torthemus), concerning a Jew physician, who, in the year 876, in the middle of winter, caused by enchantment a garden, with trees and flowers in bloom, to appear before a numerous and splendid company. The story, however, of Dianora, as well as the fourth of the present day, had formerly been told by Boccaccio himself, in the fifth book of his 'Filocopo,' which is an account of the loves of Flores and Biancafior. This story of Boccaccio is the origin of the 'Frankelein's Tale,' of Chaucer, in which the circumstances are precisely the same as in the 'Decameron,' except that the impossible thing required by the lady is, that her lover should remove the rocks from the coast of Brittany: a similar tale, however, according to Tyrwhitt, occurs in an old Breton lay, from which he conceives the incidents may have come immediately to the English poet. Boccaccio's story is unquestionably the origin of a story which occupies the whole of the twelfth canto of 'Orlando Innamorato,' and is related by a lady to Rinaldo, while he escorts her on a journey.]

NOVEL VI.

King Charles the First, surnamed the Victorious, being in love with a young lady, and ashamed afterwards of his folly, marries both her and her sister much to their advantage.

It would be too long to recount the various disputes that arose amongst the company, whether Gilberto's generosity, or Ansaldo's, or, lastly, the necromancer's, with regard to Dianora, was the greatest. The king, after suffering the debate to continue awhile, ordered Fiammetta to put an end to it, and she began presently to this effect:—Ladies, I was always of opinion, that, in such company as ours, people should speak so fully as to leave no room for doubt concerning the meaning of anything that is advanced; for disputes more properly belong to students in the schools, than to us, who can scarcely manage our wheels and our distaffs. Therefore, seeing you have been already embroiled, I shall pass over something dubious which I was going to mention, and relate an affair of no insignificant person, but of a most mighty king, stating how he behaved with regard to his honour.

You must all have heard of King Charles the Ancient, or the First, by whose glorious enterprise and great victory obtained over King Manfredi, the Ghibelline faction was driven out of Florence, and the Guelphs restored. On this account a certain knight, called Neri degli Uberti, departed with his whole family and a great store of wealth, meaning to pass the remainder of his life under the protection of no other king. Choosing a solitary place, with a design to end his days in quiet, he went to Castello da Mare, where he purchased a little estate, about a bow-shot from all other houses, amongst the olives and chestnuts, with which that place abounds, and built a small convenient house upon it, by the side of which was a most delightful garden, and in the middle of that, according to our taste, as there was great command of water, he made a fine canal, storing it well with fish. His whole delight being now to cultivate and embellish his garden, it happened that King Charles came during the summer to amuse himself at Castello da Mare for a few days; when, hearing of Neri's fine garden, he had a great desire to see it; and considering that he was of the adverse party, he resolved to use the more familiarity towards him; so he sent

him word, that he and four friends would come and sup with him the next evening in his garden. This was an agreeable message to Signor Neri, who made the finest preparations in his power for the entertainment of his royal guest. The king highly commended both the house and garden; and the table being spread by the side of the canal, he sat down, ordering Count Guido di Monforte, who was amongst his attendants, to sit on one side, and Signor Neri on the other, and as for the remaining three, they sat as they were placed by Signor Neri.

Supper was now served up in the most delicate order, with the best and richest wine, greatly to the king's liking; and whilst he was eating, with great admiration of the beauty of the place, two young damsels, of about fifteen years of age, entered the garden, with their hair, like golden wire, most curiously curled, and garlands of flowers upon their heads, whilst their mien and deportment bespoke them rather angels than mortal creatures. Their garments, which were of fine linen cloth, as white as snow, were girt round their waists, and hung thence in large folds to their feet; she that came first had two fishing-nets, which she carried in her left hand upon her shoulder, and in her right was a long stick: the other followed with a frying-pan upon her left shoulder, a faggot of wood under the arm, a trevet in one hand, and in the other hand a bottle of oil and a lighted torch.

The king was greatly surprised at this spectacle, and waited attentively to see what it meant. The damsels being come before him, made their obeisance in the humblest and most modest manner; and at the entrance of the pond, she that had the pan, with the other things, laid them down upon the ground, and taking up the stick which the other carried, they both stepped into the canal, the water of which came up to their breasts. A servant immediately kindled a fire, and laying the pan upon the trevet, and putting oil therein, he began to watch till the damsels should throw him some fish. So one of them beating the places where the fish lay, and the other holding the net, they soon caught fish enough, to the great diversion of the king; and as they were throwing them to the servant, who put them alive as it were into the pan, they cast some of the finest, as they had been before instructed, upon the table before the king, Count Guido, and their father. The king was highly delighted with seeing the fish jump about, and he tossed them back in pleasantry to

the fair fishers; and so they diverted themselves, till the servant had fried those he had in his pan, which were set before the king by Signor Neri's order, more as a curiosity than anything nice and dainty. The damsels, thinking they had now done enough, came out of the water, with their garments clinging about them, in such a manner as perfectly to exhibit every lineament of their forms, and modestly saluting the king as before, they returned into the house. The king, with the count and the gentlemen that attended, were much taken with their extraordinary beauty and modest behaviour: the king especially was perfectly lost in admiration, and finding a secret passion stealing upon him, without knowing which to prefer, they were so exactly alike, he turned to Signor Neri, and asked who those two damsels were? "My lord," he replied, "they are my daughters, born both at a birth, one of whom is called Ginevra the Pretty, and the other Isotta the Fair." The king commended them very much, and advised him to marry them; but Signor Neri excused himself, alleging that he was not in circumstances to do it.

Nothing now remained to be served up but the dessert, when the two ladies came attired in rich satin, with two silver dishes in their hands, full of all manner of fruit, which they set before the king; and retiring afterwards to some distance, they sang a song, beginning with,

Thy power, O love, who can resist? etc.

They sang with such exquisite sweetness, that it seemed to the king as if choirs of angels were descended from heaven for his entertainment. The song being ended, they fell upon their knees before him, to take their leave, which the king graciously accorded, though he was secretly grieved at their departure. When supper was concluded, the king, with his attendants, mounted their horses, and returned to the palace, where, being unable to forego the love that he had conceived for Ginevra, for whose sake he also loved her sister, who exactly resembled her, he grew so uneasy that he could think of nothing else. He therefore cultivated, under other pretences, a close intimacy with the father, and used frequently to visit him at his garden, in order to see Ginevra.

At last, unable to contain his passion any longer, and seeing he could think of no better way, he resolved to take from Neri not one daughter only, but both, by force; and he signified his intention to the Count Guido, who, being a nobleman of strict honour, said: "My liege, I am greatly

surprised at what you now say, and more perhaps than any other person would be, since I have known you better, even from your infancy; and as I never remember any such thing of you in your youth, when love has the greatest power over us, it seems now so strange, that I can scarcely give credit to it. Did it become me to reprove you, I know very well what I might say, considering that you are yet in arms in a kingdom newly conquered, amongst a people not known to you, abounding with treachery and deceit, and that you have many great and weighty affairs upon your hands; yet you can sit down at ease in such circumstances, and give way to such an idle passion as love. This is not like a great king, so much as an inglorious stripling. And, what is worse, you say you are resolved to take his two daughters away from a poor gentleman, who had them to wait upon you out of his abundant respect, as well as to show his great confidence in you, believing you to be a generous prince, and not a rapacious wolf. Have you so soon forgotten that it was Manfredi's taking the same liberties which opened your way to this kingdom? Can there be a baser crime than to take away from one who honours you, his honour, his hope, his entire comfort? What will people say in such a case? Do you think it any excuse that he is of a different party? Is this kingly justice, to treat people in that manner, be they of what party they will, who throw themselves under your protection? It was great glory to conquer Manfredi, but let me tell you, it will be much greater to conquer yourself. You, therefore, who are ordained to correct vice in others, learn to subdue your own; curb that unruly appetite, nor stain with so foul a blot the character you have so gloriously acquired."

These words touched the king to the quick, and so much the more as he knew them to be true; he sighed, therefore, and said, "Count, I hold the conquest of an enemy, however formidable, to be an easy thing compared to a victory over one's own passion; but, be the difficulty ever so great, such is the force of your words, that before many days are past I will convince you, that if I know how to conquer others, I am able also to withstand myself." So he went to Naples soon after, when, to put it out of his power to do a base thing, as well as to reward the knight for his generosity, he resolved, however grating it seemed, to give another the possession of that which he himself coveted, and to marry both

the ladies, not as Signor Neri's daughters, but his own. Bestowing, then, large fortunes upon them, he gave Ginevra the Pretty to Signor Maffeo da Palizzi, and Isotta the Fair to Signor Guilielmo della Magna, both worthy knights. Having done this, he retired to Puglia, where, with great pains and trouble, he got the better at last of his passion, and lived with ease and quiet ever after.

Now some people, perhaps, may say, that it is a small thing for a king to bestow two ladies in marriage. I allow it: but for a king to give away the very lady that he himself was in love with, and without plucking the least bud, flower, or fruit of his love, that I will maintain to be great indeed.—Such, then, were the virtues of this most generous king, rewarding the courtesy of a noble knight, showing a great and proper regard to his beloved fair one, and subduing his own desires with strict resolution and honour.

NOVEL VII.

King Pietro, knowing that a lady was love-sick for him, makes her a visit and marries her to a worthy gentleman; then, kissing her forehead calls himself ever afterwards her knight.

FIAMMETTA's novel was concluded, and the manly king's generosity much commended, although there were some of the Ghibelline faction present that seemed not to relish it; when Pampinea, having the king's command, began as follows:—Every one must praise the king for what he did, excepting such as bear him ill-will upon some other account; but as I now call to mind a thing no less praiseworthy, that was done by an enemy of his to a lady of our city, I shall beg leave to relate it.

At the time when the French were driven out of Sicily, there dwelt at Palermo, a Florentine apothecary, called Bernardo Puccini, one of very great substance, and who had an only daughter, a fine young lady, and of age to be married. Now King Pietro, having become lord of the whole island, made a great feast for all his barons at Palermo: and, as he was jousting in the street called Catalana, it chanced that Bernardo's daughter, whose name was Lisa, being in company with other ladies, at a window, observed him with great pleasure; and she gazed so long, that at last she found herself deeply in love. The feast being over, she returned home,

still thinking of nothing but this great and exalted love. But that which troubled her most was the consideration of her mean rank, which left her no hopes of success; nevertheless, she would by no means withdraw her affection, though at the same time she was afraid to disclose it. Love thus getting every day more power over her, the fair maid, unable to hold up any longer, fell at last into a languishing sickness, wasting manifestly like snow before the sun. The father and mother, by their own continual care, as well as the help of physicians, did all in their power to relieve her, but to no purpose; she despaired in her love, and so desired to die.

Now one day it happened, as the father was offering her his best services, that a thought came into her head, to make her love known to the king before her death, and she desired that Minuccio d'Arezzo might come to her. This Minuccio was a fine singer, and often with the king: the father therefore sent for him, supposing that she had a mind to be a little diverted. He came, and played a tune or two upon his violin, and sang her several songs, which, instead of appeasing, only added to her love. At length she expressed a desire to speak to him in private; so, every one else having left the room, she spoke to this purpose:

"Minuccio, I have chosen to intrust you with a secret, hoping, in the first place, that you will only reveal it to the person concerned; and, secondly, that you will assist me to the utmost of your power. The case, you must know, is this: on the day of King Pietro's rejoicing for his accession, I fell so much in love on seeing him run his tilts, that it has brought me to what you see. Knowing, therefore, how ill-placed my love is on a king, and not being able to shake it off, or any way subdue it, I have resolved, seeing it is too grievous to be borne, to die. It is true, I shall die with great uneasiness, unless he knows it first; and as I have nobody that I can trust in this affair but yourself, I therefore commit it entirely to you, in hopes that you will not refuse me this service; and when you have done it, to let me know, so that, being disburdened, I may die with more ease and comfort." Minuccio was surprised both at the greatness of her soul, and her sad resolution; and, being grieved for her, he thought of a way whereby he might fairly do her service; so he said, "Madam, be assured I will never deceive you: I commend your loftiness of mind in having set your affections on so great a king, and I offer you my assistance,

hoping that, before three days are expired, I shall bring you news that will be agreeable. To lose no time, then, I will go directly about it." She promised to comfort herself as well as she could, and wished him success. He consequently sent to one Mico da Siena, a tolerable poet in those days, who, at his request, composed the following

SONG.

CHORUS.

Go, love, and to my lord declare
The torment which for him I find;
Go, say I die, whilst still my fear
Forbids me to declare my mind.

With hands uplifted, I thee pray,
O love! that thou wouldst haste away,
And gently to my lord impart
The warmest wishes of my heart;
Declare how great my sorrows seem,
Which sighing, blushing, I endure for him.
Go, love, etc.

Why lacked I boldnesss to reveal,
For once, the passion that I feel?
To him for whom I grieve alone,
The anguish of my heart make known?
He might rejoice to hear my grief
Awaits his single pleasure for relief.
Go, love, etc.

But if this my request be vain,
Nor other means of help remain,
Yet say, that when in armour bright
He march'd, as if equipp'd for fight,
Amidst his chiefs, that fatal day
I saw, and gaz'd my very heart away.
Go, love, etc.

These words he set to a soft languishing air, as the subject required, and the third day he went to court, where the king was at dinner; and being ordered to give them a song, he sang this one, in such a gentle, sweet manner, that all the people in the room seemed converted to statues, so silently, so attentively did they stand to listen! But the king was more affected than any of the rest, and after Minuccio had made an end, he demanded why he had never heard that song before? "My lord," the other replied, "both the words and tune are not yet three days old." The king then inquiring whom it was they concerned, Minuccio replied, "That I can

tell only to your majesty." The king being desirous of knowing it, went with him into the chamber, as soon as the cloth was taken away, when Minuccio related the whole affair, with which the king seemed greatly pleased, and desired him to go directly to Lisa, and assure her, on his part, that he would certainly visit her that evening. Minuccio, overjoyed to be the bearer of such news, went immediately with his violin, and after relating to her in private what had been done, he sang her the very song. From that time there appeared in her great signs of amendment, and, without any one having the least suspicion of it, she waited in full expectation of the evening when she should see her lord.

The king, who was a gracious and good prince, having thought much of what Minuccio told him, felt more and more pity for the lady, being no stranger to her extraordinary beauty. So, getting on horseback in the evening, as if he was going to take a ride, he rode to this apothecary's house, and desired to see a fine garden that he had. There, after they had walked for some time together, the king inquired what was become of his daughter, and whether she was yet married? Bernardo replied, "My lord, she is not married; she has been indeed extremely ill, and is still so, though we think, that since nones she is wonderfully mended." The king knew what that amendment meant, and said, "In good truth, it would be a pity to lose such a pretty young lady; let us go and see her." So he went with two attendants only, and the father, into the chamber: and going to the bed-side, where Lisa sat propped up, and full of expectation of his coming, he took her by her hand, and said, "Fair maid, how comes it that you are ill? You are young and should be a delight to others; then why will you suffer this illness to prey upon you? For my sake be comforted, and get well." The lady, feeling the touch of his hand, whom she loved beyond all the world, though she could not help blushing, thought herself in perfect paradise, and answered as well as she could: "My lord, by opposing my little strength to too heavy a burden, I have come to languish in this manner; but you will soon see an amendment." Only the king understood her covert way of speaking, and after he had stayed some time longer with her, and encouraged her as much as possible, he took his leave. This condescension of the king's was much commended, and thought a great honour both to the apothecary and his daughter, who was as much pleased with it as any other lady could be with her lover; and being

cheered by better hopes, she became in a little time quite well, and more fair than ever.

Some time after, the king, having consulted with the queen about it, went on horseback, on a day appointed, attended by many of his barons to the apothecary's house, and walking in the garden, sent for him and his daughter. Presently after the queen came with a great number of ladies, and after they had spent some time in diversion, the king and queen having called Lisa to them, he said, "Fair lady, your love for me has obtained you this favour, with which, for my sake, I beg you will be satisfied; what I mean is, to give you a husband, but still I would preserve the character of your knight, without requesting anything in return but a kiss." She blushed, and replied with a low and humble voice: "My lord, were it to be publicly known that I had fixed my affection upon your majesty, I doubt not but I should be reckoned the greatest of fools, and unacquainted with my own meanness as much as with your grandeur. But God, who knows my heart, is my judge, that I then thought of you as a great king, and of myself as an apothecary's daughter, and was sensible how ill it became me to fix my love upon an object as infinitely above me. But your majesty knows, as well as myself, there is no choice in love; it is fancy only; I set my feeble strength against it, which was all I could do; so that I did, do still, and always shall, love you. But ever since I found myself captivated by you, I have thought it my duty to make your will my own; if, then, you would command anything else, I should certainly obey it. But for you, who are my king, to be called my knight, that it becomes me not to speak to, any more than the kiss which you require as the sole recompense of my love, without leave from our lady the queen. Nevertheless, for your great kindness towards me, as well as that of the queen, may Heaven shower down its choicest blessings upon you both; for my part, I am able to make no return." Here she was silent. The queen was pleased with the lady's reply, thinking her as prudent as the king had reported her. His majesty instantly called for her father and mother, and finding they approved of his intention, he sent for a young gentleman of small fortune, whose name was Perdicone, and caused him, not unwillingly, to espouse her; when, besides many jewels and other valuable presents given by them both, he bestowed Ceffalu and Calatabellotta, two very considerable estates, upon them, saying, "These I give by way of dowry with

your wife; what I intend for yourself you shall see by and by." Then, turning to her, he said, "I must now receive the fruit that is due to me from your love;" and he just saluted her forehead. So the marriage was solemnized, to the great joy of her husband, father and mother; and many report that the king was very constant to his promise, for that, as long as he lived, he always styled himself her knight, and never carried any other token of favour upon his arms, but what she sent him.—Such actions as these gain the hearts of the people, serve as an example for others to imitate, and secure in the end an everlasting fame. But there are few now-a-days that trouble their heads about that, the greater part of our princes being rather cruel tyrants.

NOVEL VIII.

Sophronia believing herself to be the wife of Gisippus, is really married to Titus Quintus Fulvius, who carries her to Rome, where Gisippus arrives some time after in great distress, and, thinking himself despised by Titus, confesses himself guilty of a murder, in order to put an end to his life. Titus recollects him, and, to save him, accuses himself, which, when the murderer sees, he delivers himself up as the guilty person. Finally, they are all set at liberty by Octavius, and Titus marries Gisippus to his sister, and gives him half his estate.

Pampinea having ceased to speak, and King Pietro having been much commended by the whole company, but especially by the Ghibelline lady, Filomena now, by the king's order, began in this manner:—We all know, ladies, that kings can do, as often as they are so disposed, everything that is great and noble. Such things are more particularly required of them. Now, he who does his duty, does well; but yet we should not wonder in that manner, and extol a king so highly for it, as we would another, who, not having the same ability, has less incumbent upon him, and yet does as much. If, therefore, you commend the actions of princes to that degree, and think them glorious, I make no doubt but those of our equals will be much more admired by you, when they are found to resemble, or even exceed them. I shall, therefore, relate the great and noble behaviour of two citizens and friends.

At the time when Octavius Cæsar (afterwards Augustus) governed the empire as one of the triumvirate, there dwelt

at Rome a gentleman called Publius Quintus Fulvius, who having a son named Titus Quintus Fulvius, a youth of wonderful parts and learning, sent him to Athens to study philosophy, and recommended him to a gentleman there, called Chremes, who was his old friend. This noble person kept him in his own house, as a companion to a son of his own, named Gisippus, and they were both put under the tuition of a philosopher, whose name was Aristippus. Being brought up thus together, their ways and tempers were so conformable, that a brotherly affection and strict friendship sprang up between them, inseparable by any other accident than death, nor had they either happiness or repose but in each other's company. They began their studies together, and proceeded, for they had each an uncommon genius, to the greatest depths of philosophy with equal steps, and marvellous applause. Thus they went on for three years, to the great joy of Chremes, who seemed to have the same regard for both, when it chanced that he died, being stricken in years, at which they manifested equal sorrow; nor could it be well said which was the more disconsolate.

A few months afterwards, the friends and relations of Gisippus came to see him, and began, along with Titus, to comfort and persuade him to take a wife, recommending a townswoman of theirs, a lady of extraordinary beauty and family, about sixteen years of age; and the time of their marriage drawing near, Gisippus prevailed upon Titus, who had not yet seen her, to go with him to pay her a visit. Coming then to the house, and she seating herself between them, Titus, considering the charms of his friend's betrothed spouse, began to view her with the greatest attention; and being immoderately taken with every part and every feature of her, and praising them secretly to himself, he soon grew as much enamoured as ever man in the world was with a woman, without, however, showing the least outward sign of it. After they had stayed some time, they left her, and returned home; and Titus, going into his chamber by himself, began to reflect upon what he had seen, and the more he thought, the more he grew in love. Recollecting himself at last, after many passionate sighs, he broke out to this effect: "Ah! unhappy Titus, where and on whom hast thou fixed thy heart, thy affections, and thy whole hope? Knowest thou not, that, for the favours received from Chremes and his family, as well as the close friendship betwixt thee and

Gisippus, to whom she is espoused, thou oughtest to reverence her as a sister? Whom, then, dost thou love? Why suffer thyself to be thus ensnared? To what purpose that deceitful hope? Open the eyes of thy understanding, O miserable man! and know thyself. Listen to reason, curb thy inordinate appetite, moderate thy irregular desires, and direct them to a different object; subdue thy lascivious passion in the beginning, and be thy own master whilst it is in thy power. It is not fit, what thou desirest: it is not honest. What thou art in pursuit of, even wert thou sure to obtain it, which thou art not, thou oughtest to flee from, if thou hadst any regard to what true friendship and thy own duty both require. What, then, wilt thou do? To act reasonably, thou must quit this love." Then, calling to mind the lady, and renouncing what he had before alleged, he said, "The laws of love are of greater force than any other; they annul those of friendship, or even the laws divine. How often has a father loved his daughter, a brother his sister? which are much stranger things than for one friend to love another friend's wife. Besides, I am young, and youth is entirely subject to the government of love. What that directs, then, I approve. Let people of more years think of what is honest: I can will nothing but to love. This her beauty commands from every one. How am I then to blame? I love her, not because she is espoused to my friend, but I should love her to whomsoever she belonged. It is only fortune that is in fault, in having bestowed her upon him; and perhaps he may be less uneasy at my admiring her, than he would be were it any other person."

Thus he kept reasoning with himself backwards and forwards, not that day and night only, but many others, insomuch that he neither eat nor slept, till at last he was forced to keep his bed. Gisippus had observed him pensive for some time, and now seeing him fall sick, was extremely grieved, and sought, by all manner of means, to comfort him, pressing earnestly to know the cause of his grief. Titus returned frivolous answers, wide of the truth, which Gisippus knew to be such; and as he was still urgent to know the real cause, Titus, compelled, as it were, at length to speak, began with sighs and tears to this effect: "O, Gisippus! if it had pleased the gods, death would have been much more welcome to me, than to live any longer, now I come to reflect that fortune has brought me into a strait, in which trial is to be made of my virtue, and I perceive that it is vanquished,

to my eternal reproach. But I expect ere long the proper reward, namely, death, which will be much more dear to me than to live with the consciousness of my own baseness, which, as I neither can nor ought to conceal anything from you, I now disclose with shame." Here he related from the beginning the whole cause of his distress and his conflict within himself, as also which way the victory had inclined, owning his extreme passion for Sophronia, and declaring, on account of its dishonourable nature, his resolution to die, which he hoped would shortly come to pass.

Gisippus, on hearing this discourse, and seeing his friend's affliction, stood some time in suspense, having a love for the lady, though in a more moderate degree: but at length his friend's life was preferred, and, sympathising with him, he wept, and said, "Titus, were it not that you stand more in need of comfort, I should upbraid you for a breach of friendship, in keeping your passion so long a secret. Admitting it to be dishonourable, yet ought it to be no more concealed than if it were otherwise; for if it be the part of a friend to rejoice at what redounds to his friend's credit, it is no less so to attempt to drive from that friend's heart what he judges contrary to it. But to leave this subject, and come to that of which you stand most in need. That you are so passionately in love with Sophronia, who is affianced to me, I am not at all surprised, but should wonder rather if it were otherwise, considering her extraordinary beauty, and the generosity of your soul, so much the more susceptible of love, in proportion to the excellency of the object. The more reason, then, there is for your loving Sophronia, the more unjustly do you complain of fortune for having bestowed her upon me, as though your love would have been more reputable had she belonged to any other person. But you should rather be pleased that fortune has made her mine; for an indifferent person would have given the preference to himself, which you can never suppose of me, if you hold me as much your friend as I really am. And my reason is this: I do not remember, since the commencement of our friendship, that I ever possessed anything but it was as much yours as my own; and if it was so in every other case, it shall be the same in this. It is true she is my spouse, and I have loved her most affectionately, waiting with impatience the consummation of our nuptials: but, as your desire and passion for her are the stronger, be assured that she shall be conducted into my chamber, not as my wife, but yours.

Then leave these despairing thoughts, shake off that cloudy disposition, reassume your former health and cheerful temper, and from this hour expect the reward and completion of your love, far more deserving of the lady than mine."

As much pleasure as Titus's hopes afforded him, with so much shame was he overwhelmed from this consideration, that the greater his friend's liberality, the greater the disgrace it would be to accept it. Therefore, unable to refrain from tears, he thus feebly replied: "Gisippus, your sincere and generous friendship points out to me what ought to be done on my part. Heaven forbid that I should take her for mine, who was more deservedly destined to be yours: had the gods thought her a fit wife for me, they would have ordered it to have been so. Accept thankfully, then, your own choice and her gift, and leave me to waste away in tears, as unworthy of such a blessing: for either I shall get the better of this passion, and so continue your friend, or else it will get the better of me, and I shall then be out of my misery."

"My dear friend," Gisippus replied, "if our intimacy might permit me to force you in any respect to comply with my will, it is in this case that I would make use of such influence; if, then, you refuse to condescend to my entreaties, I shall, with that compulsion which is necessary for my friend's welfare, take care that Sophronia be wholly yours. I know full well the force of love, and that many of its votaries have been brought by it to an unhappy end; I see you also in such danger, that you would unavoidably sink under your burden; nor should I be long behind you. Therefore, were there no other reason, yet for my own sake would your life be dear to me. You, then, shall be possessed of her, because you will never meet with any so agreeable to yourself; but, for my part, I may fancy some other as well. There is no such generosity in this; women are easier found than friends: another wife I can easily procure, but such a friend, perhaps, never. I can better transfer my affection to another, than think of losing you. Rouse yourself, then, I entreat you, if you have any regard for me, from this affliction. Comfort at once both yourself and me, and prepare to receive the joy which your most passionate love so eagerly thirsts after."

Although Titus was ashamed to give his consent, yet love, and his friend's importunities, at length prevailed: and he replied, "Gisippus, in doing what you entreat and say is so

much your desire, I know not whether I may be supposed principally to consult your pleasure or my own. As, therefore, your liberality is such that it surmounts all shame in me, I will do as you command. But remember, it is not being gratified in my love only, however great that may be; but it is receiving my life also at your hands, for which I must own myself your debtor. And may the gods grant that I may be able, some time or other, to show how much I think myself obliged by your manifesting a greater regard for me, than I had for myself!"

After this was over, Gisippus said to him, "Titus, in order that we succeed in this affair, I hold it best to take this method: you know everything is concluded between Sophronia's friends and mine, and were I now to declare my refusal of her, it would be a matter of great reproach, and I should for ever offend both her relations and mine, though the latter I should not so much regard, could I be assured you would obtain her by that means: but I am afraid lest in such case they should bestow her upon some other person, and so you lose what I gained not. If you think well of it, then I intend to proceed in the affair, and bring her home as my own spouse, when you shall privately be put to bed to her, as if she was your wife, and at a proper time the affair shall be made public; if they approve of it, it will be well; if otherwise, the thing will be done, and cannot then be undone, for which reason they must be satisfied."

Titus approved of this stratagem, and as soon as he was perfectly recovered, Gisippus brought Sophronia home with great rejoicings, when the women put her into his bed, and departed. Now Titus's chamber adjoined that of Gisippus, so that a person might go out of one into the other; Gisippus, therefore, having put out the lights, went silently to Titus, and told him that he might now go to bed to his lady. Upon this, Titus was so overcome with shame, that he began to repent, and refused it. But Gisippus, who was as much his friend as he had always professed himself, after a long contest, sent him to her; when having got into bed, he softly asked if she was willing to be his wife. She, thinking it was Gisippus, replied, "Yes." Then taking a ring of value, and putting it upon her finger, he said, "And I will be your husband." Thus everything was consummated, she thinking all the time that she was with Gisippus.

By this time Publius, the father of Titus, departed this life, when letters came to Titus, requiring him quickly to

depart for Rome upon his private affairs, which he instantly resolved upon, designing also to take with him Sophronia and Gisippus. But not seeing how this could well be managed, without his first making a full discovery of what had been done, he therefore one day called her into the chamber, and told her the whole affair, which he made clear to her by many remarkable circumstances. Upon this she gazed first at one, and then the other, with extreme confusion, and at length burst into tears, complaining bitterly of Gisippus's trick upon her; but before she made any stir about it in the house, she went directly to her father's, and declared to him and her mother the whole treachery, affirming that she was not the wife of Gisippus as they imagined, but of Titus. This was a most grievous thing both to them and all her relations, who complained heavily of Gisippus, and there was much disturbance and confusion about it. Great was the resentment of his own relations, as well as hers, and all declared him worthy not of reproof only, but severe chastisement. But he, notwithstanding, justified what he had done, averring that thanks were rather due to him from her friends, inasmuch as he had married her to one better than himself. Titus, on his part, beheld all this with great concern, and knowing it to be the temper of the Greeks to make a mighty noise and stir when no opposition is made, but where there is any resistance then to be tame and submissive, he resolved to bear their reproaches no longer without a reply, and having an Attic genius, with a true Roman spirit, he had all Gisippus's and Sophronia's friends summoned together into a temple, and coming thither, accompanied only by Gisippus, he addressed the expecting multitude in the following manner:

"It is the opinion of many philosophers, that we mortals do nothing but what is preordained by the immortal gods, whence some conclude that our actions are determined by a fatal necessity, although others refer that necessity to things already past. Whoever has regard to either of these tenets, must allow, that to find fault with what cannot be revoked, is, in other terms, to quarrel with Providence, whom we should believe to govern by perpetual laws, not subject to error, both us and all our affairs; and yet you yourselves are the people that presume to do this, if it be true, as I hear, that you are continually exclaiming against my marriage with Sophronia, whom you had given to Gisippus, never considering that it was decreed from the beginning that she should

not be his wife, but mine, as the effect now proves. However, as the secrets of Providence are too knotty and intricate a subject for most people to comprehend, I am willing to suppose that no regard is had to what is done here below, and shall confine myself altogether to the dictates of human reason. Speaking, therefore, in that manner, I am forced to do two things contrary to my natural temper: to commend myself, and to blame or lessen other people. But as I shall keep strictly to the truth in both respects, and the nature of the case requires me to do both, I therefore proceed.

"Your complaints arise more from rage than reason; you are continually reviling Gisippus, because he generously parted with a lady whom you designed to be his wife. This action, nevertheless, deserves the highest commendation, and that for two reasons. First, because he has thereby performed a most noble act of friendship; and secondly, he has acted more wisely than you yourselves would have done. How far the sacred bonds of friendship oblige one friend to go for another, I shall not at present examine, but content myself barely with reminding you, that they are much stronger than the ties of blood. Our friends are our own choice, but our relations we receive at the hands of fortune. If, therefore, Gisippus, who is my friend, valued my life beyond your favour, you need not be surprised. But, secondly, I will show, by divers instances, seeing that you know little of Providence, and much less of the effects of friendship that he has proved himself wiser than you all. You gave Sophronia to him, being a young gentleman and a philosopher; he bestowed her on a young gentleman and a philosopher also. You gave her to an Athenian; he conferred her upon a Roman. You gave her to one of a good family; he to a person of a better. You to one that was rich; he to another much richer. You to one who but little esteemed, and scarcely knew her; he to one that loved her as his own life. Consider, then, what I have said, article by article. We are of equal years, and our studies have been the same; he, indeed, is an Athenian, and I a Roman, but no one can pretend to put those two cities in comparison. Rome is an independent, free city; Athens, a tributary one. Rome is mistress of the whole world; whilst Athens is under her subjection. Rome is justly famed for arms, extent of empire, and for all sorts of polite learning; whilst Athens is only remarkable for a little philosophy. And though you see me here a scholar, and of no great account, yet I am not descended from

the dregs of the people. My houses and the public places are filled with the statues of my ancestors, and our annals record the numberless triumphs of the Quintii brought home by them into the Roman Capitol. Nor has time itself tarnished our glory, but the lustre of our house continues the same as ever. I say nothing of my wealth, out of mere shame, remembering that a virtuous poverty was the noblest patrimony of the ancient Romans: but if you be of a different opinion, and think with the ignorant multitude there is any real excellence in riches, I can then tell you, that I am abundantly provided, not from my own covetous desires, but the gift of fortune. I know very well that you desired his alliance, as he is of your own city: but why should not I be as much esteemed by you at Rome, considering that you will then have a faithful friend and advocate in all your affairs, both public and private? Upon all these grounds I must conclude that Gisippus has judged more wisely than yourselves. Sophronia is married to a noble and wealthy citizen of Rome, one of an ancient family, and a friend of Gisippus; therefore, whoever makes any complaint or stir about it, neither does as he ought, nor yet knows what he does.

"But some, perhaps, may say, 'We do not so much blame the thing, as the manner in which it was done, she being made his wife, as it were, by stealth.' Why, this is no such strange matter! How many examples are there of this kind in the world? Do not daughters marry without their parents' consent? Some go into foreign countries with their gallants, and others never discover their marriages at all, till their appearance or lying-in does it for them. Now there is nothing like this in Sophronia's case; she was decently and honourably disposed of by Gisippus to me. Others may allege, that she was married to a person for whom she was never designed; but those complaints are now exceedingly foolish, and to no purpose whatever. Fortune makes use of strange methods sometimes to bring things to pass. What is it to me, whether it be a cobbler or a philosopher that does any business of mine, or whether it be in public or private, provided the end be good? Indeed, if I find the cobbler indiscreet in his management, he shall have no more to do for me; but still I am obliged to thank him when he does me any real service. Gisippus has married Sophronia well; then to what purpose is it how he did it? If you question his prudence, let him have no more of your daughters to dispose of; but still thank him for providing so well for this one. I never

meant to throw a stain upon your family, in the person of Sophronia; and though I married her in that manner, I neither came as a ravisher, nor one refusing your alliance; I was charmed with her beauty and virtue; and fearing, if I proceeded in the usual way, that you would never give your consent, on account of my taking her away to Rome, I therefore had recourse to this artifice and made Gisippus espouse her for me.—Moreover, though I loved her most immoderately, yet, to show you that my designs were strictly honourable, I first espoused her with my own ring, as she can bear me witness, asking her whether she was willing to take me for her husband, when she made answer that she was; if she was deceived, she herself is to blame for not asking me who I was.

"This, then, is the mighty crime committed by him as a friend, and me as a lover: for this you lay snares for, and threaten his life. What could you do more, had he given her to the veriest scoundrel in the universe? But letting this alone for the present, the time is now come, on account of my father's unexpected death, for my returning to Rome; and as I intend to take Sophronia along with me, I have thought it proper to declare what might otherwise have been kept secret. If you be wise, you will take it in good part; for, were I capable of such an action, I might basely have left her. But heaven forbid that such a thought should ever enter the breast of a Roman! Sophronia, therefore, is mine by the will of Heaven, the laws of men, the generosity of my friend, and the innocent artifice wherewith love inspired me; whilst you, thinking yourself wiser than other people, or even the gods themselves, contest my title two ways, both very injurious to me: first, by seeking to detain Sophronia, over whom you have no more power than I choose to give you; and, secondly, by your ill treatment of my friend, to whom yourselves are greatly obliged. How indiscreet you are in both respects I shall not say at present, but will only advise you amicably to give up your resentment, and deliver Sophronia to me, that I may depart your friend, and continue so; assuring you, whether you be pleased or otherwise with what is done, that if you offer to proceed in a different manner, I will then take Gisippus along with me; and when I come to Rome, fetch her, who is mine by right, in spite of you all, from amongst you, making you sensible, at the same time, what it is to incur the just displeasure of the Romans."

After Titus had done speaking, he took Gisippus by the hand, and went out with him, knitting his brows, and showing all the marks of passion at those within the temple, whilst they, moved partly with the reasons he had given, and partly terrified with his last words, thought it better to admit him as a relation, since Gisippus had refused it, than to lose the alliance of one, and procure the enmity of the other. So they went with one accord, and told him, that they consented he should have Sophronia, and should esteem him as their kinsman, and Gisippus as their friend. Having made a solemn agreement with him to that effect, they departed, delivering Sophronia up to him; and she, being wise enough to make a virtue of necessity, immediately transferred to Titus the love she had borne to Gisippus, and went with him to Rome, where she was received with great honour and respect.

Gisippus continued at Athens in little esteem with the people, and powerful parties were now formed against him, insomuch that he was at length driven from the place, and doomed with all his family to perpetual banishment. Being thus destitute of all friends, and no better than a common beggar, he traveled, as well as he could to Rome, to see if Titus would take notice of him. Finding that his friend was alive, and in great favour with the people, he inquired for his house, and went thither, waiting till he should come past. Not daring to speak a word, on account of his poverty, he yet put himself in the way, in hopes that he would recollect and challenge him; but he passed by, and Gisippus, imagining that he had seen and despised him, and calling to mind what he had formerly done for him, went away confounded with grief and despair. It was now night, he had been fasting all that day, and being without a penny of money in his pocket, and desiring nothing so much as to die, he rambled about, without knowing whither, till he came to a solitary part of the city, where he found a great cavern, and went into it, intending to pass the night there; then laying himself down, almost naked, upon the hard ground, he wept himself asleep. To this place two thieves, who had been robbing all night, came with their booty towards break of day, and quarrelling together about it, one killed the other, and departed. This Gisippus perceiving, and thinking he had now found a way to die, without even laying hands upon himself, he stayed there till the officers, who had notice of the murder, came and hurried him violently away. Upon

examination, he confessed that he had committed the deed, and had not the power afterwards to stir from the place. On this, Marcus Varro, who was the prætor, gave sentence that he should be crucified, as was the usual manner of death in those cases.

Now it happened, by good chance, that Titus came into the hall at the very time, and looking attentively in the prisoner's face, and hearing the cause of his condemnation, he instantly knew him to be Gisippus. He wondered, therefore, greatly at this change of fortune, and what could bring him thither, and was determined, at all events, to save him: but seeing no other way but by accusing himself, he stepped resolutely forward, and called aloud to the prætor in this manner: "Marcus Varro, recall thy sentence; for the person whom thou hast condemned to die is innocent: it was I who offended the gods by the murder of that man whom the officers found slain this morning: then do not offend them still more by the murder of another innocent person." Varro was quite astonished, and grieved to that degree, that the whole hall heard him; but not being able, with regard to his own honour, to alter the course of the laws, he ordered Gisippus to come back, and said in the presence of Titus, "How couldst thou be so foolish to confess, without any torture, a crime whereof thou art no way guilty, and which would affect thy life? Thou saidst thou wast the person that slew the man, and now here is another come, who says it was not thou, but he, that did it." Gisippus lifted up his eyes, and saw that it was Titus, when concluding that it was done out of a grateful remembrance of the favours he had received, he burst into tears, and said, "Indeed, sir, I did murder him, and Titus's regard for my safety comes now too late." Titus, on the other hand, said, "Marcus Varro, take notice, this man is a stranger, and was found without any arms, by the man's side that was murdered; it is only his poverty that makes him so desirous of dying; then set him at liberty, and punish me, who have deserved it." Varro was greatly astonished at the pressing instances of both, presuming that neither the one nor the other was guilty; and as he was thinking of a method how they might both be acquitted, behold, a young fellow named Publius Ambustus, one of a notorious character, and who had actually done the thing, had the humanity, seeing each accusing himself, to come before the prætor, and say, "Sir, the Fates have forced me hither, to solve this difficulty. Some god or power

within me spurs me on to make a confession of my own guilt. Know, therefore, that neither of these people, who are impeaching themselves, was any way accessary. I murdered the man early this morning, and this poor wretch was there asleep, whilst I and the man who is killed were dividing our spoil. As for Titus, there is no occasion for my vindicating him; his character is without reproach. Set them both, then, at liberty, and let me suffer what the laws require." The affair was soon told to Octavius Cæsar, who, being desirous of knowing why they wanted so much to suffer, had all three brought before him, when each related fully how the thing really was. Thereupon he set the two friends at liberty, because they were innocent, and pardoned the third also for their sakes.

Titus then took his friend Gisippus by the hand, and, after reproving him for his distrust of his friendship, brought him to his own house, where Sophronia received him with the same affection as if he had been her brother; and giving him clothes suitable to his worth and quality, he afterwards divided his whole substance with him, and bestowed a sister of his, named Fulvia, an agreeable young lady, upon him in marriage, saying, "Gisippus, you have your free choice whether to stay with me, or to go, with what I have given you, into Greece;" but he, moved partly by his exile, and partly by his love and friendship for Titus, agreed to stay at Rome, where they all lived together in one house, he with his Fulvia, and Titus with his fair Sophronia, to their mutual satisfaction, every day adding something, if possible, to their felicity.

A most sacred thing, then, is friendship! and worthy not only of singular reverence, but to be celebrated with perpetual applause, as being the prudent mother of magnanimity and honour, the sister of gratitude and charity, and the enemy of hatred and avarice; always ready, without being requested, to manifest that virtuous kindness to others which she would have shown to herself; whose divine effects are rarely now to be met with, to the great reproach of the sordidness of mankind, which has driven it in a long exile to the farthest corner of the earth. What degree of love, wealth, or affinity, could have wrought so effectually upon the heart of Gisippus, to make him feel the pangs of his friend, and give him up to his beloved spouse? What laws, what threats, or fears, could have caused the youth and

vigour of Gisippus to forsake his own bed, where a beautiful young lady lay expecting him, and betake himself to dark and lonesome places? What greatness, what rewards, could have made him heedless of disobliging all his own relations, as well as Sophronia's, and indifferent to the unjust murmurs and insults of the people, to serve his friend? What, I say, but this only? On the other hand, what could have prompted Titus, without deliberation, when he might have fairly pretended not to have seen him, to contrive his own death, in order to save Gisippus? What could have made him so liberal in parting with half his substance to Gisippus, whom fortune had dispossessed of his own patrimony? What but this alone could have induced Titus, when he saw him poor and destitute, to give him his sister? To what purpose, then, do men covet numbers of relations, brethren, and children, and procure, at a vast expense, great plenty of servants, when, for the least inconvenience that they may sustain, people are so apt to forget their duty to parent, brother, or master? Whereas, in true friendship it is quite otherwise: that sacred obligation serves instead of all degrees of affinity.

[This tale is taken from the second story of Petrus Alphonsus; but Boccaccio has made considerable alterations, if we may judge of the original from the form in which it is exhibited by Le Grand (iii, 262). There it is not two young men brought up together who form this romantic attachment, but two mercantile correspondents, the one residing in Syria, and the other in Egypt; and the renunciation of his mistress by the latter takes place soon after his first interview with his partner. The change which has been made by the Italian novelist in this particular is a manifest improvement. In the next place, in the tale of 'Alphonsus,' it is not thought necessary to deceive the bride after the nuptials, in the manner related above; she is transferred, without further ceremony, as a piece of property, from one friend to the other, which is a convincing proof of the eastern origin of the tale. Lastly, in 'Alphonsus,' the friend who is reduced in his circumstances does not fancy himself neglected by his former companion; he sees the murder committed before he enters Rome, and avails himself of the incident to get free from a life in which he had no longer any enjoyment.

As thus improved by Boccaccio, the story ranks high among serious Italian novels. The internal conflict of Titus—the subsequent contest between the friends—the harangue of Titus to the two assembled families, and the beautiful eulogy on friendship, which terminates the tale,

form, in the opinion of critics, the most eloquent passages in the 'Decameron,' or perhaps in the Italian language.

The story of 'Gisippus' was translated into Latin by the novelist Bandello, and into English by Edward Lewicke, 1562, whose version perhaps directed to this tale the notice of Goldsmith, who has inserted it in his Miscellanies, though it is there said to be taken from a Byzantine historian, and the friends are called Septimius and Alcander. Boccaccio's story has also evidently suggested the concluding incidents of Greene's 'Philomela,' and is the subject of an old French drama by Hardy, entitled 'Gesippe, ou les Deux Amis.']

NOVEL IX.

Saladin, disguising himself like a merchant, is generously entertained by Signor Torello, who, going upon an expedition to the Holy Land, allowed his wife a certain time to marry again. In the mean time he is taken prisoner, and being employed to look after the hawks, is recognised by the Soldan, who shows him great respect. Afterwards Torello falls sick, and is conveyed by magic art, in one night, to Pavia, at the very time that his wife was to have been married; when he makes himself known to her, and returns with her home.

Filomena had now concluded her story, and Titus's gratitude having been much applauded, the king began in this manner:—Most certainly, ladies, Filomena is in the right as to what she has said upon friendship; and it was with reason she complained, last of all, of its being in such little esteem with mankind: and, had we met here to correct or reprove the vices of the age, I could proceed in a fluent harangue to the same purpose; but, as that is foreign to our design, I intend to relate, in a long but pleasant novel, one of the many generous actions of Saladin; to the end, that if, through our imperfections, we cannot attain the friendship of any one, we should yet make it a pleasure to oblige, in hopes that a reward may ensue some time or other.

I say, therefore, that in the reign of the Emperor Frederick the First, a general crusade was undertaken by all the Christian princes for the recovery of the Holy Land: which design of theirs coming first to the ears of Saladin, a most renowned prince, then soldan of Babylon, he resolved to go in person to see what preparations were making against him, in order to provide the better for his own defence. So, settling all his affairs in Egypt, and taking with him two of his most sage and principal nobles, and three servants only, he

set forwards in the habit of a merchant, as if he was going on a pilgrimage. After travelling over many Christian countries, and riding through Lombardy, in order to pass the mountains, it happened, towards the evening, that, between Pavia and Milan, he met with a gentleman, named Torello d'Istria, who was going with his hawks, hounds, and servants to a country-house that he had on the river Tesino. Torello, upon seeing them, supposed that they were strangers of some quality, and as such was desirous of showing them repect. Saladin, therefore, having asked one of the servants how far it was to Pavia, and if they could get there time enough to be admitted, Torello would not let the servant reply, but answered himself, "Gentlemen, it is impossible for you to reach Pavia now before the gates are shut."—"Then," quoth Saladin, "please to inform us, as we are strangers, where we may meet with the best entertainment." Torello replied, "That I will do with all my heart; I was just going to send one of my fellows to a place near Pavia, upon some particular business; he shall go with you, and bring you to a place where you will be accommodated well enough." So, taking one of the most discreet of his men aside, and having told him what he should do, he sent him along with them, whilst he made the best of his way to his own house, where he had as elegant a supper provided for them as was possible within so short a time, and the tables all spread in the garden; and when he had done this he went to the door to wait for his guests. The servant rode chatting along with them, leading them by round-about ways, till at last, without their suspecting it, he brought them to his master's house. As soon as Torello saw them, he advanced pleasantly, saying, "Gentlemen, you are most heartily welcome." Saladin, who was a very shrewd person, perceived that the knight was doubtful whether they would have accepted his invitation had he asked them to go with him home, and that he had contrived this stratagem not to be denied the pleasure of entertaining them. So he returned his compliment, and said, "If it was possible for one person to complain of another's courtesy, we should have cause to blame yours, which, not to mention the hinderance of our journey, compelled us, without deserving your notice otherwise than by a casual salutation, to accept of such great favours as these." Torello, being both wise and eloquent, replied, "Gentlemen, it is but poor respect you receive from me, compared to what you deserve, so far as I can judge by your countenances; but, in truth, there was no

convenient place out of Pavia that you could possibly lie at; then pray take it not amiss that you have stepped a little out of your way to be something less incommoded." As he said this, the servants were all at hand to take their horses; so they alighted, and were shown into rooms prepared for them, where they had their boots pulled off, were refreshed with a glass of wine, and fell into an agreeable discourse together afterwards till supper-time

Now Saladin and his people all spoke Latin extremely well, so that they were easily understood by each other, and Torello seemed, in their judgment, to be the most gracious, accomplished gentleman, and one that talked the best of any they had ever met with. On the other hand, Torello also judged them to be people of great rank and figure, and much beyond what he at first apprehended; for which reason he was extremely concerned that he could not then have an entertainment and guests suitable. But for this he resolved to make amends the following day; and having instructed one of his servants what he would have done, he sent to Pavia, which was near at hand, and by a way where no gate was locked, to his wife, who was a lady of great sense and magnanimity. Afterwards, taking his guests into the garden, he courteously demanded of them who they were. Saladin replied, "We are merchants from Cyprus, and are going upon our affairs to Paris."—"Would to heaven, then," said Torello, "that our country produced such gentry as I see Cyprus does merchants!" So they fell from one discourse to another till the hour for supping, when they seated themselves just as they pleased, and a supper, entirely unexpected, was served up with great elegance and order. In some little time, after the tables were removed, Torello, supposing they might be weary, had them conducted to their chambers, where most sumptuous beds were prepared for them, and he in like manner went to take his rest.

The servant that was sent to Pavia delivered his message to the lady, who, not with a feminine disposition, but a soul truly loyal, got together great numbers of the friends and servants of Torello, and had everything provided to make a feast indeed, sending through the city by torchlight, to invite most of the nobility, and setting forth all the rooms with rich furniture of cloth of gold, fine tapestry, velvets, etc., according to his directions. In the morning the gentlemen arose, and mounted their horses, along with Torello, who ordered out his hawks, and carried them to a neighbouring

lake, where he showed them two or three fair flights; but Saladin requesting somebody to direct him to the best inn in Pavia, Torello said, "That I will do, because I have business there." So they were satisfied, and rode on along with him, arriving there about the third hour of the day. And whilst they supposed that he would carry them to the best inn, he brought them directly to his own house, where were about fifty of the principal persons of the city ready to receive them. Saladin and his friends perceiving this, readily guessed how the matter was, and they said, "Sir, this is not what we desired; you did enough for us last night, and more than we could have wished; you might now, therefore, very well let us pursue our journey." He made answer, "Gentlemen, last night I was obliged to fortune, which surprised you upon the road in such manner that you were necessitated to take up with my little mansion; but now I shall be indebted to you, and these noble persons all around equally with me, if, out of your great courtesy, you will not refuse the favour of dining with me." Thus they were prevailed upon, and they alighted from their horses, when they were welcomed by the company with great joy and respect, and conducted into several apartments most richly set for their reception, where laying aside their riding-dresses, and taking some refreshment, they then made their appearance in the grand hall. After washing their hands they sat down all in order, when such a prodigious entertainment was served up, that if the emperor himself had been present, he could not have been more sumptuously regaled. Even Saladin himself, and his friends, who were people of figure, and accustomed to everything of grandeur, could not help being astonished, having regard to the rank of the person whom they knew to be only a private gentleman.

When dinner was over, and they had discoursed a little together, the Pavian gentry all withdrew to repose themselves, the weather being extremely hot; and Torello, being left with his three guests, showed them into a drawing-room, where, that nothing which he valued might be left unseen by them, he sent for his lady. She, therefore, being a person of extraordinary beauty, and most sumptuously attired, was speedily introduced between her two little sons, who seemed like angels, when she very modestly and genteelly saluted them. At her coming, they arose, and received her with great deference and respect, seating her down by them, and taking great notice of the children. In a little time, after

some discourse together, when Torello was gone out of the room, she, in a modest and graceful manner, began to inquire of them whence they came, and whither they were going. To which they returned the same answer they had given to Torello. "Then," said she, very pleasantly "I see, gentlemen, that my poor design may be acceptable; I beg, then, as a particular favour, that you will not think lightly of a very small present which I mean to offer you; but considering that women give little things, according to their slender abilities, that you will accept it, more out of respect to the good intention of the donor, than the real value of the present." So she ordered two robes to be brought for each, the one lined with taffeta, and the other with fur, not so much becoming a citizen or a merchant as a great lord; and three doublets of sarsnet, with the same of linen, saying, "Gentlemen, pray accept of these things: I clothe you as I do my husband: and, for the rest, considering that you are a great way from your wives, that you have come a long journey, and have far yet to go, they may be of service though of small value, especially as you merchants love always to be genteel and neat." They were greatly surprised, seeing plainly that Signor Torello would allow no part of his respect to be wanting, doubting likewise, when they came to see the richness of the presents, whether they were not discovered. At length one of them said, "Madam, these are very great things, and such as we ought not to accept, unless you force them upon us; in which case we must comply." Her husband now returned, when she took her leave, and went and made suitable presents to their servants.

Torello, with much entreaty, prevailed upon the strangers to stay there all that day: therefore, after taking a little sleep, they put on those robes, and took a ride with him round the city, and at their return were nobly entertained with a great deal of good company at supper. At due time they went to bed, and when they arose in the morning, instead of their wearied steeds, they found three strong, handsome, fresh ones, with new serviceable horses also for their servants; which when Saladin saw, he turned to his friends, and said, "I vow to Heaven, a more complete, courteous, or a more understanding gentleman, I never met with anywhere; and if the Christian kings be in their degree like to him, the soldan of Babylon would never be able to stand against one, much less so many as are now preparing to invade us." Knowing well that it would be in vain to refuse

the horses, after returning all due thanks, he and his attendants mounted, and Torello, with a great number of his friends, went with them a considerable distance from the city: and, though Saladin was grieved to separate from Torello, such was the regard he had conceived for him, yet, being constrained to depart, he begged he would return. He, yet loath to leave them, replied, "Gentlemen, I will do so, as it is your desire; but this I must tell you, I know not who you are, nor do I seek to be informed any farther than you desire I should; but, be you who you may, you shall never make me believe that you are merchants, and so I commend you to Providence."—Saladin then took leave of all the company, and to Torello he said, "Sir, we may chance to show you some of our merchandise, and so convince you; but, in the mean time, fare you well." Thus Saladin departed, and his companions, with a firm resolution, in case he lived, and the approaching war did not prevent it, to show no less respect and honour to Signor Torello than he had received from him; and talking much of him, his lady, and everything that he had said and done, he commended all, to the greatest degree imaginable. At length, after Saladin had travelled over the west, not without great labour and fatigue, he embarked on board a ship for Alexandria; and being fully informed as to every particular, he prepared for a most vigorous defence.

Signor Torello returned to Pavia, full of conjectures who these three people might be, in which, however, he was far from the truth. But the time was now drawing nigh for the march of the forces, and great preparations being made everywhere, Torello, notwithstanding the prayers and tears of his lady, resolved to go, and having everything in readiness, and being about to mount his horse, he said to her, "My dear, you see I am going upon this expedition, as well for the glory of my body as the safety of my soul: I commend my honour and everything else to your care; and, as my departure is now certain, but my return, by reason of a thousand accidents which may happen, uncertain, I request, therefore, this one favour, that, happen what will to me, if you have no certain account of my being alive, you will only wait a year, a month, and a day, without marrying again, reckoning from the day of my leaving you." The lady, who wept exceedingly, thus replied: "My dear husband, I know not how I shall be able to bear the grief in which you leave me involved for your going from me: but,

if I should outlive it, and anything happen amiss to you, you may live and die assured, that I shall live and die the wife of Torello, and of his memory." He then said, "I make not the least doubt but that what you promise will be performed, as far as lies in your power; but you are young, beautiful, and well descended, and your virtues so universally known, that I am afraid, should there be the least suspicion of my death, that many great lords and noble personages would come, and demand you of your brethren and other relations, from whose most urgent solicitations you could never defend yourself, however you might be disposed, and so you would be compelled to give way. It is, then, for this reason, that I would tie you down to that time, and not for a moment longer." The lady said, "I will do all in my power with regard to my promise; but should I ever think of acting otherwise, yet your injunction I will steadily abide by. Heaven grant, however, that I see you long before that time!" Here she embraced him, shedding abundance of tears, and taking a ring from her finger, gave it him, and said, "If I should chance to die before your return, remember me always when you look upon this." He received it, and, bidding every one farewell, mounted his horse and rode away, with a handsome retinue, for Genoa.

At that port they all embarked, and soon arrived at Acre, when they joined the Christian army, which was visited by a mortal pestilence that swept away a great part of the people; and the thin remains of it were, by the dexterity or good fortune of Saladin taken prisoners almost to a man, and distributed into divers cities to be imprisoned, when it was Torello's fortune to be sent to Alexandria. There, being unknown, and fearing lest he should be discovered, he was driven by necessity to undertake the care of hawks, of which he was a great master. By that means he soon fell under the notice of Saladin, who set him at liberty, and made him his falconer. Torello, who went by no other name than that of the Christian, and neither remembered the soldan, nor the soldan him, had all his thoughts at Pavia, and was often contriving how to make his escape, though without success; but some ambassadors from Genoa being come thither to treat with the soldan about the redemption of certain of their countrymen, as they were just upon their departure, he resolved to write to his lady, to let her know he was alive and would make all possible haste home, and to pray her, therefore, to be in daily expectation of his com-

ing; and so he did. He earnestly entreated also, one of the ambassadors, whom he knew, that he would take care those letters came to the hands of the abbot of San Pietro, who was his uncle. Whilst Torello remained in this condition, it happened one day, as Saladin was talking with him about his hawks, that he chanced to laugh, when he made a certain motion with his lips, which Saladin, when he was at his house in Pavia, had taken particular notice of. Upon this he recollected him; and looking steadfastly at him, believed he was the same person. Now leaving his former discourse, he said, "Tell me, Christian, of what country in the west art thou?"—"My lord," replied he, "I am a Lombard, and born in a city called Pavia; but am a poor man, and of no account." When Saladin heard that, he became assured of what he doubted before, saying joyfully to himself, "Providence has now given me an opportunity of showing how acceptable his generosity was to me." So, causing his wardrobe to be set open, he carried him thither, and said, "Take notice, Christian, if there is any one robe amongst these that thou hast ever seen before." Torello soon cast his eye upon that which his lady had given to Saladin, but not imagining it could be the same, he replied, "My lord, I know not one; two there are indeed, which are like what I have worn formerly, and which I gave to three merchants that were at my house." Now Saladin could refrain no longer; but taking him joyfully in his arms, he said, "You are Signor Torello d'Istria, and I am one of the three merchants to whom your lady gave these robes: and now the time is come for me to convince you what my merchandise is, as I said, at my leaving you, might possibly happen." Torello, at hearing these words, was overwhelmed both with joy and shame: joy, at having had such a guest; and shame, to think how indifferently he had received him. Then said Saladin, "Torello, as Providence has sent you hither, account yourself to be master, and not me." So, after great expressions of joy, he clothed him in royal apparel, and having recommended him to all his principal barons, and spoken highly in his praise, he commanded them to show him the same respect and honour as they would himself, if they expected any favour at his hands; which, accordingly, they all observed, especially the two lords who had accompanied Saladin at his house.

The great pitch of grandeur and glory, to which Torello saw himself so suddenly advanced, had made him forgetful

of his affairs in Lombardy, especially as he was in hopes that his letters had been conveyed safe to his uncle. Now there was among the Christians, on the day they were surprised by Saladin, a gentleman of small esteem, dead and buried, called Torello di Dignes; consequently, as Torello d'Istria was universally known through the whole army, on account of his nobility, whoever heard that Torello was dead, concluded it was he of Istria, and not of Dignes; and their being all taken prisoners immediately upon that event, prevented people's being undeceived; so that many Italians returned home with the news, and some were daring enough to affirm that they had seen him dead, and were present at his interment. This occasioned great grief both to his wife and his relations, as also to every one that knew him. It would be tedious to set forth the lady's trouble and affliction, who, after wearing out some months in mourning, and beginning now to be a little comforted, was much pressed by her brethren and relations to marry again, seeing she was courted by divers great lords of Lombardy. She several times, with tears, withstood their solicitations, till, being over-importuned, she consented at last, provided they would let her wait the time prescribed by Torello.

Things proceeding thus at Pavia, and there wanting only eight days for her taking a second husband, it happened one day that Torello met with one of the people whom he had seen go on board with the Genoese ambassadors, and inquiring of him what sort of a voyage they had, and when they arrived at Genoa, the other replied, "Sir, they had a very bad one, as we understood at Crete, whither I was bound; for, as they came near to Sicily, a strong north wind arose, which drove them upon the sands of Barbary, so that every soul of them perished, and amongst the rest two of my brethren were lost." Torello gave credit to this account, which indeed was very true, and calling to mind that the limited time was near expiring, supposing likewise that no tidings had come to Pavia concerning him, he took it for granted that she would be married again, and laid it so much to heart, that he began to loathe his food, and was brought to death's door; which, when Saladin understood, who had a great affection for him, he came to visit him, and learning, after great importunity, the cause of his disorder, he reproved him for not acquainting him with it sooner, desiring him, nevertheless, to be easy, and promising that he should be at Pavia within the time, and he told him in what manner. Torello

gave credit to these words, hearing that it was possible, and had been often done, and he began to take heart, and to press Saladin about it; who, therefore had recourse to a necromancer, whose skill he had made trial of, desiring he would convey Torello upon a bed to Pavia in one night's time. The necromancer promised it should be done, but said it would be more convenient for him to be thrown into a sleep. This having been concerted, Saladin returned to Torello, and found him bent upon being at Pavia, if possible, within the time, otherwise wishing to die; when he said to him, "Torello, if you have that prodigious value for your lady, and are in such concern lest she should be given away to another, heaven knows my heart, I can in no way blame you for it; because, of all the women I ever saw, her address and behaviour, setting beauty aside, which is only a fading flower, are most to be commended and esteemed. I should have been glad, as fortune has sent you hither, that what time we have to live we might have reigned together in these our kingdoms. But as I am not likely to have this favour, and you seem resolved to go to Pavia in due time, or else to die, I could greatly have wished to have known it early enough, that I might have sent you home with that state and equipage which your virtue justly requires. But as this did not happen, and you are desirous of being instantly there, I will take care you shall be conveyed in the manner I related to you." Torello then replied, "My lord, the effects, without the words, have sufficiently made manifest your generous disposition towards me, and which, in that supreme degree, is far beyond my deserts: what you say, living or dying, I shall most assuredly rely upon you. As that, then, is my desire, I beg it may be done immediately, for to-morrow is the last day of my being expected."

This Saladin promised, and resolving to send him away the following night, he had a most beautiful and rich bed put up in his grand hall, made of fine velvet and cloth of gold, according to their custom, over which was a most curious counterpoint, wrought in certain figures, with the largest pearls and other precious stones, supposed to be of immense value, with two noble pillows, suitable to such a bed. When this was done, he ordered Torello to be clothed after the Saracen manner, with the richest and most beautiful robes that were ever seen, and a large turban folded upon his head; and it now growing late, he went with divers of his nobles to the chamber where Torello was, when, sitting down by

him, he began to weep and say, "Torello, the hour is now at hand which must divide us, and as I can neither attend you myself, nor cause you to be attended, through the nature of the journey you have to go, which will not admit of it, I must, therefore, take leave of you in your chamber, for which purpose I am now come hither. First, then, I commend you to God's providence, begging you, by the love and friendship existing between us, to be mindful of me always, and, if it be possible, before we finish our lives, that you would settle your affairs in Lombardy, and come once more at least to see me, in order to make some amends for the pleasure which your hasty departure now deprives me of: and till this shall happen, do not think much to visit me by letters, asking whatever favours you please from me, being assured there is no person living whom I would so readily oblige as yourself." Torello could not refrain from tears, and answered in a few words, as well as he could for weeping, that it was impossible the favours he had received should ever be forgotten by him, and that, at a proper time, he would not fail to do what he desired. Saladin then embraced him, and saying, "God be with you!" departed out of the chamber, weeping: the nobles also took their leave, and went with Saladin into the great hall, where the bed was provided. But it now waxing late, and the necromancer desiring despatch, a physician came with a certain draught, and telling him that it was to fortify his spirits, made him drink it off, when he was immediately cast into a profound sleep. He was then, by Saladin's order, laid upon that magnificent bed, on which was set a most beautiful crown, of prodigious value, written upon in such a manner as to show that it was designed by Saladin as a present to Torello's lady. On his finger he put a ring, wherein was a carbuncle, that appeared like a flaming torch, the value of which was not to be estimated. To his side was a sword girt, with such ornaments that the like was scarcely ever seen. About his neck was a kind of solitaire not to be equalled for the value of the pearls and other precious stones, with which it was embellished. And, lastly, on each side were two great basins of gold, full of double ducats, with many strings of pearl, rings, girdles, and other things, too tedious to mention; which were laid all round him. When this was done, he kissed Torello once more, as he lay upon his bed, commanding the necromancer then to use all possible expedition. Instantly the bed, with Torello upon it, was carried away in presence of them all, leaving them in

discourse about it, and set down in the church of San Pietro di Pavia, according to his own request. There, in the morning when it rung to matins, he was found fast asleep, with all these jewels and other ornaments, by the sacrist, who, coming into the church with a light in his hand, and seeing that rich bed, was frightened out of his wits, and ran out.—When the abbot and monks saw him in this confusion, they were greatly surprised, and inquired the reason, which the monk told them. "How!" quoth the abbot, "thou art no child or stranger here, to be so easily terrified: let us go and see this bugbear." They then took more lights, and went all together into the church, where they saw this wonderful rich bed, and the knight lying upon it fast asleep. And, as they stood gazing at a distance, and fearful of taking a nearer view, it happened, the virtue of the draught being gone, that Torello awoke, and heaved a deep sigh; at which the monks and abbot all cried out, "Lord have mercy upon us!" and away they ran. Torello now opened his eyes, and looking around him, saw he was where he had desired Saladin to have him conveyed, at which he was extremely satisfied; so raising himself up, and beholding the treasure he had with him, whatever Saladin's generosity seemed to him before, he now thought it greater than ever, as having had more knowledge of it. Nevertheless, without stirring from the place, seeing the monks all run away in that manner, and imagining the reason, he began to call the abbot by name, and to beg of him to entertain no doubts in the affair, for that he was Torello, his nephew.—The abbot, at hearing this, was still more afraid, as he supposed him dead many months before; till, being assured, by good and sufficient reasons, and hearing himself again called upon, he made the sign of the cross, and went to him. Then said Torello, "Father, what are you in doubt about? I am alive, God be thanked, and now returned from beyond sea." The abbot, notwithstanding he had a great beard, and was dressed after the Turkish fashion, soon remembered him; and plucking up some courage, he took him by the hand, and said, "Son, you are welcome home. You need not be surprised at my fear, for there was nobody here but was fully persuaded of your death, insomuch that, I must tell you, your lady, Madam Adalieta, overpowered by the prayers and threats of her friends, is now married again, contrary to her own will, and this morning she is to go home to her new husband, and everything is prepared for solemnizing the nuptials."

Torello now rose, and saluted the abbot and all the monks, begging of them to say nothing of his return, till he had dispatched a certain affair. Afterwards, having carried all the jewels and wealth into a place of safety, he related all that had passed to the abbot, who was extremely rejoiced. He then desired to know who that second husband was, and the abbot informed him; when he replied, "I should be glad, before she knows of my return, to see how she relishes this wedding: therefore, though it be unusual for the clergy to go to such entertainments, yet, for my sake, I wish you could contrive so that we may both be there." The abbot answered, that he would with all his heart.

When it was daylight, he sent to the bridegroom, to let him know that he and a friend would come together to his wedding. The bridegroom replied that he should be obliged to them for the favour. And when dinner-time came, Torello, in the same habit in which he had arrived, went along with the abbot to the bridegroom's house, where he was wonderfully gazed at, though known by nobody, the abbot giving out that he was going as an ambassador from the Soldan to the King of France. Torello was then seated at a table opposite to his wife, whom he beheld with great pleasure, and thought he saw uneasiness in her looks at these nuptials. She would likewise give a look sometimes towards him, not out of any remembrance she had of him, for that was quite taken away by his great beard, strange dress, and her full persuasion that he was dead. At last, when he thought it a fit time to try if she would remember him, he took the ring in his hand which she had given him at his departure, and calling one of the young men that were in waiting, he said, "Tell the bride, from me, that it is a custom in our country, when any stranger, as I may be, is at such an entertainment as this, for the bride, in token of his being welcome, to send the cup in which she herself drinks, full of wine; when, after the stranger has drunk what he pleases, and covered up the cup, the bride then pledges him with the rest." The youth delivered the message to the lady, who, thinking him to be some great personage, to let him see his company was agreeable, ordered a large golden cup, which she had before her, to be washed, and filled with wine, and to be carried to him. Torello, having put the ring into his mouth, contrived to let it fall into the cup, without any one's perceiving it; and leaving but little wine therein, he covered it up, and sent it to the lady, who received it; and, in com-

pliance with the custom, uncovered and put it to her mouth, when she saw the ring; and, considering it awhile, and knowing it to be the same she had given her husband, she took it, and began to look attentively at the supposed stranger; when, calling him to mind, like a distracted person, she threw all the tables down before her, crying out, "This is my lord! This is truly Torello?" Then, running to the table where he was sitting, without having regard to anything that was upon it, she cast that down likewise, and clasped her arms about him in such a manner as if she would never separate from him more. At last, the company being in some confusion, though for the most part pleased with the return of so worthy a knight, Torello, after requesting silence, gave them a full account of what had befallen him to that hour; concluding that he hoped the gentleman who had married his wife, supposing he was dead, would not be offended, seeing he was alive, that he took her back again. The bridegroom, though he was not a little disappointed, replied freely, and as a friend, that no doubt he might do what he pleased with his own. She consequently gave up the ring and crown, which she had received from her new husband, and put on that ring instead, which she had taken out of the cup, and likewise the crown sent to her by Saladin; and, leaving the bridegroom's house, she went home with all nuptial pomp along with Torello, and his friends and relations, whom his loss rendered disconsolate, and all the citizens likewise, looking upon him as a miracle, went joyfully to see him, and pay him their respects. Part of the jewels Torello gave to him who had been at the expense of the marriage-feast, and part to the abbot, and to divers others; and having signified his happy arrival to Saladin, he remained from that time his friend and faithful servant, living many years afterwards with his most worthy spouse, and continuing more generous and hospitable than ever. This, then, was the end of both their afflictions, and the reward of their most cheerful and ready courtesy.—Many there are that attempt the like, who, though they have the means, do it yet with such an ill grace, as turns rather to their discredit. If, therefore, no credit ensue thence, neither they nor any one else ought to be surprised.

"THIS IS INDEED TORELLO. TRULY MY LORD!"

TENTH DAY ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ NOVEL IX

SALADIN
AND
TORELLO

NOVEL X.

The marquis of Saluzzo, having been prevailed upon by his subjects to marry, in order to please himself in the affair, made choice of a countryman's daughter, by whom he had two children, which he pretended to put to death. Afterwards, seeming as though he was weary of her, and had taken another, he had his own daughter brought home, as if he had espoused her, whilst his wife was sent away in a most distressed condition. At length, being convinced of her patience, he brought her home again, presented her children to her, who were now of considerable years, and ever afterwards loved and honoured her as his lady.

THE king's long novel being concluded, which had all the appearance of pleasing, Dioneo, as the only person left to speak, began in this manner:—We seem to-day, most gracious ladies, to have had only to do with kings, soldans, and such-like people; therefore, that I may not be left too far behind, I intend to speak of a marquis, not with regard to anything noble and great, but rather monstrously vile and brutish, although it ended well at last: which, notwithstanding the event, I would yet advise nobody to imitate.

It is a long time ago, that, among the marquises of Saluzzo, the principal or head of the family was a youth, called Gualtieri, who, as he was a bachelor, spent his whole time in hawking and hunting, without any thought of ever being encumbered with a wife and children; in which respect, no doubt, he was very wise. But this being disagreeable to his subjects, they often pressed him to marry, to the end that he might neither die without an heir, nor they be left without a lord; offering themselves to provide such a lady for him, and of such a family, that they should have great hopes from her, and he reason enough to be satisfied. "Worthy friends," he replied, "you urge me to do a thing which I was fully resolved against, considering what a difficult matter it is to find a person of a suitable temper, with the great abundance everywhere of such as are otherwise, and how miserable also the man's life must be who is tied to a disagreeable woman. As to your getting at a woman's temper from her family, and so choosing one to please me, that seems quite a ridiculous fancy; for, besides the uncertainty with regard to their true fathers, how many daughters do we see resembling neither father nor mother? Nevertheless, as you are so fond of having me noosed, I will agree to be so. Therefore, that I may have nobody to blame but myself, should it happen amiss, I will make my own choice; and I protest, let me

marry whom I will, that, unless you show her the respect that is due to her as my lady, you shall know, to your cost, how grievous it is to me to have taken a wife at your request, contrary to my own inclination." The honest men replied, that they were well satisfied, provided he would but make the trial.

Now the marquis had taken a fancy, some time before, to the behaviour of a poor country girl, who lived in a village not far from his palace, and thinking that he might live comfortably enough with her, he determined, without seeking any farther, to marry her. Accordingly, he sent for her father, who was a very poor man, and acquainted him with it. Afterwards, he summoned all his subjects together, and said to them, "Gentlemen, it was and is your desire that I take a wife: I do it rather to please you, than out of any liking I have to matrimony. You know that you promised me to be satisfied, and to pay her due honour, whoever she is that I shall make choice of. The time is now come when I shall fulfil my promise to you, and I expect you to do the like to me: I have found a young woman in the neighbourhood after my own heart, whom I intend to espouse, and bring home in a very few days. Let it be your care, then, to do honour to my nuptials, and to respect her as your sovereign lady; so that I may be satisfied with the performance of your promise, even as you are with that of mine." The people all declared themselves pleased, and promised to regard her in all things as their mistress. Afterwards they made preparations for a most noble feast, and the like did the prince, inviting all his relations, and the great lords in all parts and provinces about him: he had also most rich and costly robes made, shaped by a person that seemed to be of the same size with his intended spouse; and provided a girdle, ring, and fine coronet, with everything requisite for a bride. And when the day appointed was come, about the third hour he mounted his horse, attended by all his friends and vassals; and having everything in readiness, he said, "My lords and gentlemen, it is now time to go for my new spouse."

So on they rode to the village, and when he was come near the father's house, he saw her carrying some water from the well, in great haste, to go afterwards with some of her acquaintance to see the new marchioness; when he called her by her name, which was Griselda, and inquired where her father was. She modestly replied, "My gracious lord,

he is in the house." He then alighted from his horse, commanding them all to wait for him, and went alone into the cottage, where he found the father, who was called Giannucolo, and said to him, "Honest man, I am come to espouse thy daughter, but would first ask her some questions before thee." He then inquired, whether she would make it her study to please him, and not be uneasy at any time, whatever he should do or say; and whether she would always be obedient; with more to that purpose. To which she answered, "Yes." He then led her out by the hand, and made her strip before them all; and ordering the rich apparel to be brought which he had provided, he had her clothed completely, and a coronet set upon her head, all disordered as her hair was; after which, every one being in amaze, he said, "Behold, this is the person whom I intend for my wife, provided she will accept of me for her husband." Then, turning towards her, who stood quite abashed, "Will you," said he, "have me for your husband?" She replied, "Yes, if it so please your lordship."—"Well," he replied, "and I take you for my wife." So he espoused her in that public manner, and mounting her on a palfrey, conducted her honourably to his palace, celebrating the nuptials with as much pomp and grandeur as though he had been married to the daughter of the king of France; and the young bride showed apparently, that with her garments she had changed both her mind and behaviour. She had a most agreeable person, and was so amiable, and so good-natured withal, that she seemed rather a lord's daughter than a poor shepherd's; at which every one that knew her before was greatly surprised. She was so obedient also to her husband, and so obliging in all respects, that he thought himself the happiest man in the world; and to her subjects likewise so gracious and condescending, that they all honoured and loved her as their own lives, praying for her health and prosperity, and declaring contrary to their former opinion, that Gualtieri was the most prudent and sharp-sighted prince in the whole world; for that no one could have discerned such virtues under a mean habit, and a country disguise, but himself. In a very short time, her discreet behaviour and good works were the common subject of discourse, not in that country only, but everywhere else; and what had been objected to the prince with regard to his marrying her, now took a contrary turn. They had not lived long together, before she proved with child,

and at length brought forth a daughter, for which he made great rejoicings.

But soon afterwards a new fancy came into his head, and that was to make trial of her patience by long and intolerable sufferings: so he began with harsh words, and an appearance of great uneasiness; telling her that his subjects were greatly displeased with her for her mean parentage, especially as they saw she bore children; and that they did nothing but murmur at the daughter already born. Which, when she heard, without changing countenance, or her resolution, in any respect, she replied, "My lord, pray dispose of me as you think most for your honour and happiness: I shall entirely acquiesce, knowing myself to be meaner than the meanest of the people, and that I was altogether unworthy of that dignity to which your favour was pleased to advance me." This was very agreeable to the prince, seeing that she was no way elevated with the honour he had conferred upon her. Afterwards, having often told her, in general terms, that his subjects could not bear with the daughter that was born of her, he sent one of his servants, whom he had instructed what to do, who, with a very sorrowful countenance, said to her, "Madam, I must either lose my own life, or obey my lord's commands: now he has ordered me to take your daughter, and ——" without saying anything more. She, hearing these words, and noting the fellow's looks, remembering also what she had heard before from her lord, concluded that he had orders to destroy the child. So she took it out of the cradle, kissed it, and gave it her blessing; when, without changing countenance, though her heart throbbed with maternal affection, she tenderly laid it in the servant's arms, and said, "Take it, and do what thy lord and mine has commanded; but, prithee, leave it not to be devoured by the fowls or wild beasts, unless that be his will." Taking the child, he acquainted the prince with what she said, who was greatly surprised at her constancy; and he sent the same person with it to a relation at Bologna, desiring her, without revealing whose child it was, to see it carefully brought up and educated. Afterwards the lady became with child a second time, and was delivered of a son, at which he was extremely pleased.

But, not satisfied with what he had already done, he began to grieve and persecute her still more; saying one day to her, seemingly much out of temper, "Since thou hast brought me this son, I am able to live no longer with my

people; for they mutiny to that degree, that a poor shepherd's grandson is to succeed, and be their lord after me, that, unless I would run the risk of being driven out of my dominions, I must needs dispose of this child as I did the other; and then send thee away, in order to take a wife more suitable to me." She heard this with a great deal of resignation, making only this reply: "My lord, study only your own ease and happiness, without the least care for me; for nothing is agreeable to me, but what is pleasing to yourself." Not many days after, he sent for the son in the same manner as he had done for the daughter; and seeming also as if he had procured him to be destroyed, had him conveyed to Bologna, to be taken care of with the daughter. This she bore with the same resolution as before, at which the prince wondered greatly, declaring to himself, that no other woman was capable of doing the like. And, were it not that he had observed her extremely fond of her children, whilst that was agreeable to him, he should have thought it want of affection in her; but he saw it was only her entire obedience and condescension. The people, imagining that the children were both put to death, blamed him to the last degree, thinking him the most cruel and worst of men, and showing great compassion for the lady; who, whenever she was in company with the ladies of her acquaintance, and they condoled with her for her loss, would only say, "It was not my will, but his who begot them."

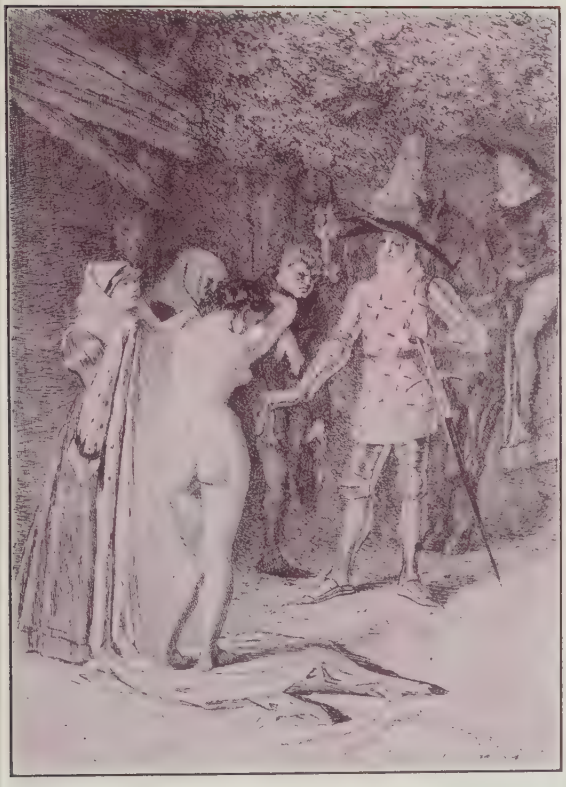
But more years being now passed, and he resolving to make the last trial of her patience, declared, before many people, that he could no longer bear to keep Griselda as his wife, owning that he had done very foolishly, and like a young man, in marrying her, and that he meant to solicit the pope for a dispensation to take another, and send her away: for which he was much blamed by many worthy persons; but he said nothing in return, only that it should be so. She, hearing this, and expecting to go home to her father's, and possibly tend the cattle as she had done before; whilst she saw some other lady possessed of him, whom she dearly loved and honoured, was perhaps secretly grieved; but as she had withstood other strokes of fortune, so she determined resolutely to do now. Soon afterwards, Gualtieri had counterfeit letters come to him, as from Rome, acquainting all his people that his holiness thereby dispensed with his marrying another and turning away Griselda. He then had her brought before them, and said, "Woman, by the pope's leave

I may dispose of thee, and take another wife. As my ancestors, then, have been all sovereign princes of this country, and thine only peasants, I intend to keep thee no longer, but to send thee back to thy father's cottage, with the same portion which thou broughtest me, and afterwards to make choice of one more suitable in quality to myself." It was with the utmost difficulty she could now refrain from tears; and she replied, "My lord, I was always sensible that my servile condition would in no way accord with your high rank and descent. For what I have been, I own myself indebted to Providence and you; I consider it as a favour lent me: you are now pleased to demand it back; I therefore willingly restore it. Behold the ring with which you espoused me; I deliver it to you. You bid me take the dowry back which I brought you; you will have no need for a teller to count it, nor I for a purse to put it in, much less a sumpter-horse to carry it away; for I have not forgotten that you took me naked; and if you think it decent to expose that body, which has borne you two children, in that manner, I am contented; but I would entreat you, as a recompense for my virginity, which I brought you, and do not carry away, that you would please to let me have one shift over and above my dowry." He, though ready to weep, yet put on a stern countenance, and said, "Thou shalt have one only then.' And, notwithstanding the people all desired that she might have an old gown, to keep her body from shame, who had been his wife thirteen years and upwards, yet it was all in vain; so she left his palace in that manner, and returned weeping to her father's to the great grief of all who saw her.

The poor man, never supposing that the prince would keep her long as his wife, and expecting this thing to happen every day, had safely laid up the garments of which she had been despoiled the day he espoused her. He now brought them to her, and she put them on, and went as usual about her father's little household affairs, bearing this fierce trial of adverse fortune with the greatest courage imaginable. The prince then gave it out that he was to espouse a daughter of one of the counts of Panago; and, seeming as if he made great preparations for his nuptials, he sent for Griselda to come to him, and said to her, "I am going to bring this lady home whom I have just married, and intend to show her all possible respect at her first coming: thou knowest that I have no women with me able to set out the rooms, and do many

THE IMMORTAL STORY OF GRISELDA

TENTH DAY ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ NOVEL X



other things which are requisite on so solemn an occasion. As, therefore, thou art best acquainted with the state of the house, I would have thee make such provisions as thou shalt judge proper, and invite what ladies thou wilt, even as though thou wert mistress of the house, and when the marriage is ended, get thee home to thy father's again. Though these words pierced like daggers to the heart of Griselda, who was unable to part with her love for the prince so easily as she had done her great fortune; yet she replied, "My lord, I am ready to fulfil all your commands." She then went in her coarse attire into the palace, whence she had but just before departed in her shift, and with her own hands did she begin to sweep, and set all the rooms to rights, cleaning the stools and benches in the hall like the meanest servant, and directing what was to be done in the kitchen, never giving over till everything was in order, and as it ought to be. After this was done, she invited, in the prince's name, all the ladies in the country to come to the feast. And on the day appointed for the marriage, meanly clad as she was, she received them in the most genteel and cheerful manner imaginable.

Now Gualtieri, who had his children carefully brought up at Bologna (the girl being about twelve years old, and one of the prettiest creatures that ever was seen, and the boy six), had sent to his kinswoman there, to desire she would bring them, with an honourable retinue, to Saluzzo; giving it out all the way she came, that she was bringing the young lady to be married to him, without letting any one know to the contrary. Accordingly they all three set forwards, attended by a goodly train of gentry, and, after some days travelling, reached Saluzzo about dinner-time, when they found the whole country assembled, waiting to see their new lady. The young lady was most graciously received by all the women present, and being come into the hall where the tables were all covered, Griselda, meanly dressed as she was, went cheerfully to meet her, saying, "Your ladyship is most kindly welcome." The ladies, who had greatly importuned the prince, though to no purpose, to let Griselda be in a room by herself, or else that she might have some of her own clothes, and not appear before strangers in that manner, were now seated, and going to be served round, whilst the young lady was universally admired, and every one said that the prince had made a good change; but Griselda, in particular, highly commended both her and her brother. The marquis now thinking that he had seen enough with regard to his

wife's patience, and perceiving that in all her trials she was still the same, being persuaded, likewise, that this proceeded from no want of understanding in her, because he knew her to be singularly prudent, he thought it time to take her from that anguish which he supposed she might conceal under her firm and constant deportment. So, making her come before all the company, he said, with a smile, "What thinkest thou, Griselda, of my bride?"—"My lord," she replied, "I like her extremely well; and if she be as prudent as she is fair, you may be the happiest man in the world with her: but I most humbly beg that you would not take those heart-breaking measures with this lady as you did with your last wife, because she is young, and has been tenderly educated, whereas the other was inured to hardships from a child."

Gualtieri perceiving that though Griselda thought that person was to be his wife, that she nevertheless answered him with great humility and sweetness of temper, he made her sit down by him, and said, "Griselda, it is now time for you to reap the fruit of your long patience, and that they who have reputed me to be cruel, unjust, and a monster in nature, may know that what I have done has been all along with a view to teach you how to behave as a wife; to show them how to choose and keep a wife; and, lastly, to secure my own ease and quiet as long as we live together, which I was apprehensive might have been endangered by my marrying. Therefore, I had a mind to prove you by harsh and injurious treatment; and not being sensible that you have ever transgressed my will, either in word or deed, I now seem to have met with that happiness I desired. I intend, then, to restore in one hour what I had taken away from you in many, and to make you the sweetest recompense for the many bitter pangs I have caused you to suffer. Accept, therefore, this young lady, whom you thought my spouse, and her brother, as your children and mine. They are the same whom you and many others believed that I had been the means of cruelly murdering: and I am your husband, who love and value you above all things; assuring myself, that no person in the world can be happier in a wife than I am." With this he embraced her most affectionately, when, rising up together (she weeping for joy), they went where their daughter was sitting, quite astonished with these things, and tenderly saluted both her and her brother, undeceiving them and the whole company. At this the women all arose, overjoyed, from the tables, and taking Griselda into the

chamber, they clothed her with her own noble apparel, and as a marchioness, resembling such an one even in rags, and brought her into the hall. And being extremely rejoiced with her son and daughter, and every one expressing the utmost satisfaction at what had come to pass, the feasting was prolonged many days. The marquis was judged a very wise man, though abundantly too severe, and the trial of his lady most intolerable; but as for Griselda, she was beyond compare. In a few days the Count da Panago returned to Bologna, and the marquis took Giannucolo from his drudgery, and maintained him as his father-in-law, and so he lived very comfortably to a good old age. Gualtieri afterwards married his daughter to one of equal nobility, continuing the rest of his life with Griselda, and showing her all the respect and honour that was possible. What can we say then, but that divine spirits may descend from heaven into the meanest cottages; whilst royal palaces shall produce such as seem rather adapted to have the care of hogs, than the government of men? Who but Griselda could, not only without a tear, but even with seeming satisfaction, undergo the most rigid and unheard-of trials by her husband? Many women there are, who, if turned out of doors naked in that manner, would have procured themselves fine clothes, adorning at once their persons and their husband's brows.

[The original of this celebrated tale was at one time believed to have been an old MS. entitled 'Le Parement des Dames.' This was first asserted by Duchat, in his notes on Rabelais. It was afterwards mentioned by Le Grand and Manni, and through them by the Abbé de Sade and Gallaud ('Discours sur quelques anciens Poètes'); but Tyrwhitt informs us, that Oliver de la Marche, the author of the 'Parement des Dames,' was not born for many years after the composition of the 'Decameron,' so that some other original must be sought. Noguier in his 'Histoire de Thoulouse,' asserts that the patient heroine of the tale actually existed in 1103. In the 'Annales d'Aquitaine,' she is said to have flourished in 1025. That there was such a person is positively asserted by Foresti de Beigamo, in his 'Chronicle,' though he does not fix the period at which she lived. The probability, therefore, is that Boccaccio's novel, as well as the 'Parement des Dames,' has been founded on some real or traditional incident; a conjecture which is confirmed by the letter of Petrarch to Boccaccio, written after a perusal of the 'Decameron,' in which he says he had heard the story of Griselda related many years before.

From whatever source derived, 'Griselda' appears to have been the most popular of all the stories of the 'Decameron.' In the fourteenth

century, the prose translations of it in French were very numerous; Le Grand mentions that he had seen upwards of twenty, under the different names, 'Miroir des Dames,' 'Exemples de bonnes et mauvaises Femmes,' etc. Petrarch, who had not seen the 'Decameron' till a short time before his death (which shows that Boccaccio was ashamed of the work), read it with much admiration, as appears from his letter, and translated it into Latin, in 1373. Chaucer, who borrowed the story from Petrarch, assigns it to the Clerk of Oxenforde, in his 'Canterbury Tales.' The clerk declares in his prologue that he learned it from Petrarch at Padua; and if we may believe Warton, Chaucer, when in Italy, actually heard the story related by Petrarch, who, before translating it into Latin, had got it by heart, in order to repeat it to his friends. The tale became so popular in France, that the comedians of Paris represented, in 1393, a Mystery, in French verse, entitled, 'Le Mystère de Griseldi.' There is also an English drama, named 'Patient Grissel,' entered in Stationers' Hall, 1599. One of Goldoni's plays, in which the tyrant husband is king of Thessaly, is also formed on the subject of 'Griselda.' In a novel by Luigi Alamanni, a count of Barcelona subjects his wife to a similar trial of patience with that which Griselda experienced. He proceeds, however, so far as to force her to commit dishonorable actions at his command. The experiment, too, is not intended as a test of his wife's obedience, but as a revenge, on account of her once having refused him as a husband.

The story of Boccaccio seems hardly deserving of so much popularity and imitation. "An English reader," says Ellis, in his notes to Way's Fabliaux, "is naturally led to compare it with our national ballad, the 'Nut Brown Maid' (the 'Henry and Emma' of Prior), because both compositions were intended to describe a perfect female character, exposed to the severest trials, submitting, without a murmur, to unmerited cruelty, disarming a tormenter by gentleness and patience; and finally recompensed for her virtues by transports rendered more exquisite by her sufferings." The author then proceeds to show that although the intention be the same, the conduct of the ballad is superior to that of the novel. "In the former, the cruel scrutiny of the feelings is suggested by the jealousy of a lover, anxious to explore the whole extent of his empire over the heart of a mistress; his doubts are perhaps natural, and he is only culpable because he consents to purchase the assurance of his own happiness at the expense of the temporary anguish and apparent degradation of the object of his affections. But she is prepared for the exertion of her firmness by slow degrees; she is strengthened by passion, by the consciousness of the desperate step she had already taken, and by the conviction that every sacrifice was tolerable which ensured her claim to the gratitude of her lover, and was paid as the price of his happiness; her trial is short, and

her recompense is permanent. For his doubts and jealousy she perhaps found an excuse in her own heart; and in the moment of her final exultation and triumph in the consciousness of her own excellence, and the prospect of unclouded security, she might easily forgive her lover for having evinced that the idol of his heart was fully deserving of his adoration. Gualtieri, on the contrary, is neither blinded by love nor tormented by jealousy: he merely wishes to gratify a childish curiosity, by discovering how far conjugal obedience can be carried; and the recompense of unexampled patience is a mere permission to wear a coronet without further molestation. Nor, as in the ballad, is security by a momentary uneasiness, but by long years of suffering. It may be doubted whether the emotions to which the story of Boccaccio gives rise are at all different from those which would be excited by an execution on the rack. The spirit, too, of resignation, depends much on its motive; and the cause of morality is not greatly promoted by bestowing on a passive submission to capricious tyranny the commendation which is only due to a humble acquiescence in the just dispensations of Providence."]

Dioneo's novel, which was now concluded, was much canvassed by the whole company, this blaming one thing, and that commending another, according to their respective fancies; when the king, seeing the sun was now far in the west, and that the evening drew on apace, said, without rising from his seat, "I suppose you all know, ladies, that a person's sense and understanding consist, not only in remembering things past, or knowing the present, but that to be able, by both these means, to foresee what is to come, is, by the more knowing part of mankind, judged the greatest proof of wisdom. To-morrow, you are aware, it will have been fifteen days since we, by way of amusement, and for the preservation of our lives, came out of Florence, avoiding all those cares and melancholy reflections which continually haunted us in the city, since the beginning of that fatal pestilence. And, in my opinion, we have done honestly and well. For, though some light things have been talked of, and a loose given to all sorts of innocent mirth, yet am I not conscious of anything blame-worthy that has passed among us; but everything has been decent, everything harmonious, and such as might well beseem the community of brothers and sisters. Lest, therefore, something should happen, which might give us uneasiness, and make people put a bad construction upon our being so long together, now all have had their days, and their shares of honour, which at present rests in me, I hold it most advisable for us to return

from whence we came. Besides, as people know of our being together, our company may probably increase, which would make it entirely disagreeable. If you approve of it, then, I will keep the power till to-morrow, that we depart; but if you resolve otherwise, I have a person in my eye to succeed me." This occasioned great debates, but at last it was thought safest and best to comply with the king's advice. He consequently called the master of the household, and, after giving proper directions for the next morning, dismissed them all till supper-time. They now betook themselves, as usual, some to one thing and some to another, for their amusement; and, when the hour came, supped very agreeably together, after which they began their music; and whilst Lauretta led up a dance, the king ordered Fiammetta to sing a song, which she did in a pretty, easy manner, as follows:—

SONG.

CHORUS.

Did love no jealous cares infest,
No nymph on earth would be so blest.

If sprightliness, and blooming youth,
An easy and polite address,
Strict honour, and regard for truth,
Are charms which may command success;
Then sure you will my choice approve,
For these all centre in my love.
Did love, etc.

But when I see what arts are tried,
By nymphs as fair and wise as I,
A thousand fears my heart betide,
Lest they should rob me of my joy;
Thus that for which I triumph'd so,
Becomes the cause of all my woe.
Did love, etc.

Would he prove firm to my desire,
No more I should myself perplex:
But virtues like to his inspire
The same regard in all our sex:
This makes me dread what nymph be nigh,
And watch each motion of his eye.
Did love, etc.

Hence, then, ye damsels, I implore,
As you regard what's just and fit,

That you, by am'rous wiles, no more
This outrage on my love commit:
For know, whilst thus you make me grieve,
You shall repent the pain you give.

Did love no jealous cares infest,
No nymph on earth would be so blest.

As soon as Fiammetta had finished her song, Dioneo, who sat close to her, laughed and said, "Madam, it would be kind to let the ladies know whom you mean, for fear some other should take possession out of ignorance, and you have cause to be offended." The song was followed by many others, and, it now drawing near midnight, they all went, at the king's command, to repose themselves. By break of day they arose, and, the master of the household having sent away their carriages, returned, under the conduct of their discreet king, to Florence, when the three gentlemen left the seven ladies in new St. Mary's church, where they first met, going from thence where it was most agreeable to themselves; and the ladies, when they thought fit, repaired to their several houses.

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THE END